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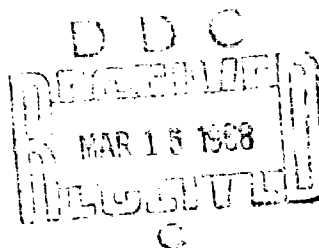
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CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE IN INTERNAL CONFLICT

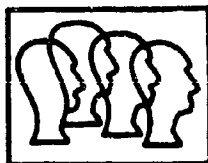
Volume I

THE EXPERIENCE IN ASIA



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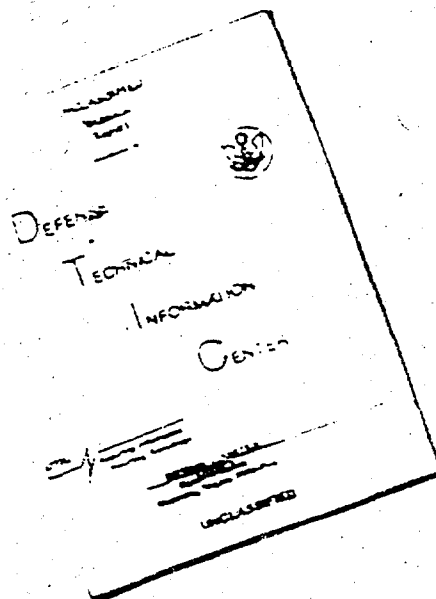


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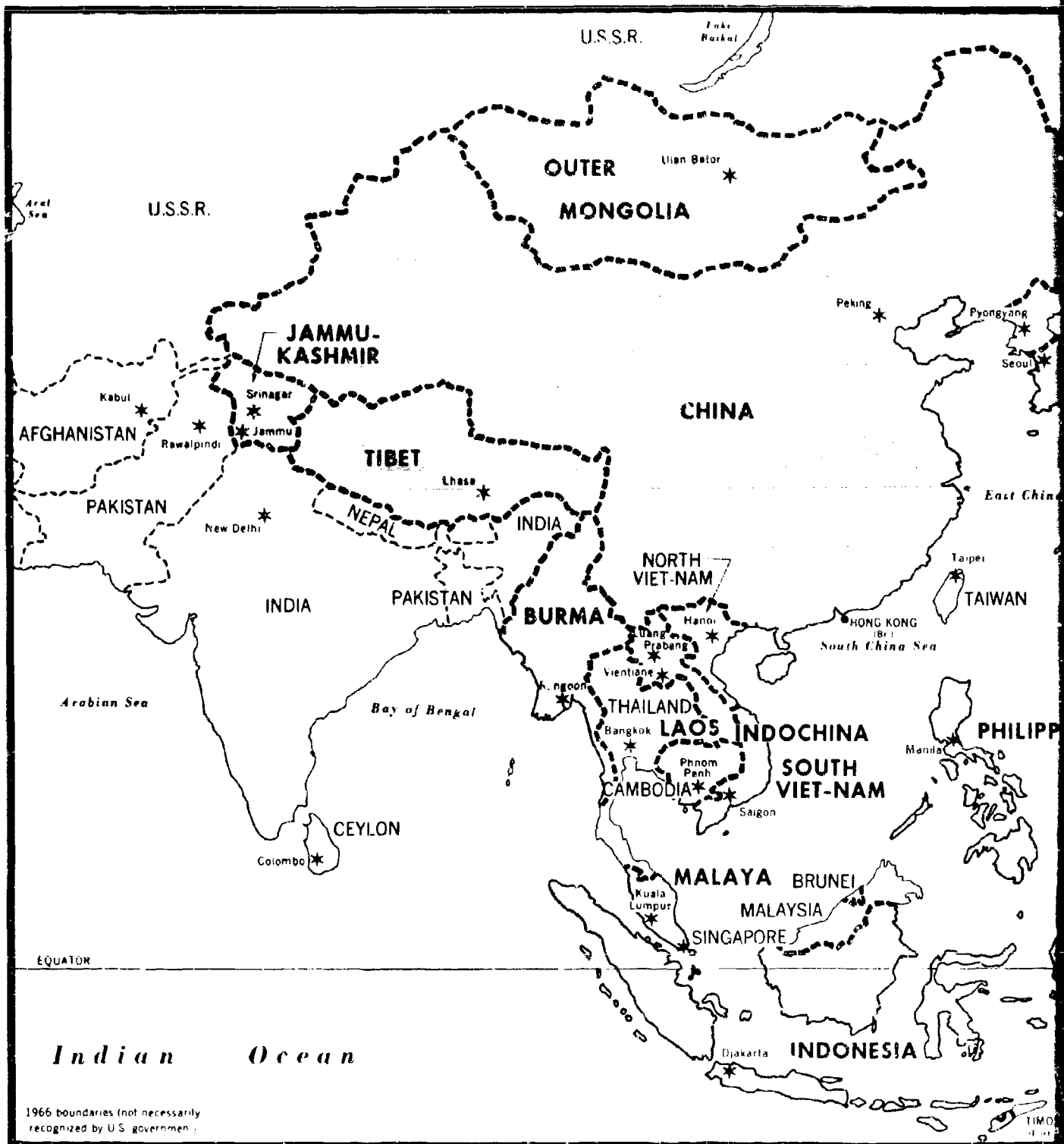
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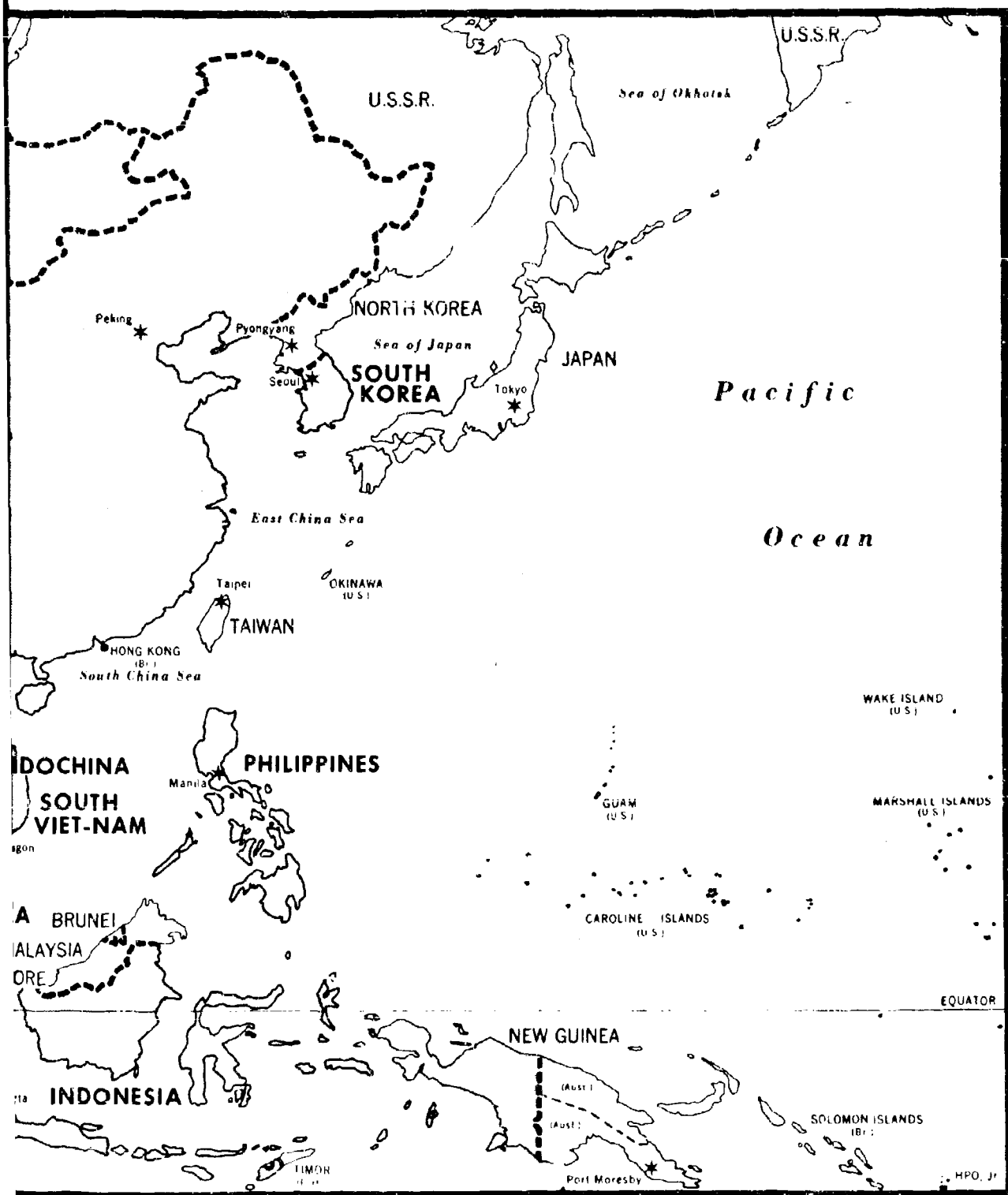
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CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE IN INTERNAL CONFLICT

Volume I
THE EXPERIENCE IN ASIA

by
D. M. Conait
Bert H. Cooper, Jr.
and Others

February 1968

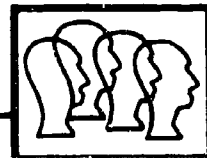
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ABSTRACT

The present study is one of three volumes in a series entitled Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict. The series contains descriptive and analytical accounts covering a total of 57 cases of insurgency and counterinsurgency occurring in the 20th century. The three volumes are individually entitled The Experience in Asia, The Experience in Europe and the Middle East, and The Experience in Africa and Latin America.

The purpose of the project was to enlarge the body of knowledge about insurgency and especially counterinsurgency by empirical study of actual historical cases. From a sample of about 150 cases, 57 were selected according to criteria governing time, definition, occurrence of military operations, analogy, and feasibility. Persons of academic and professional background were then selected to study individual cases according to a standardized methodology (described in the Technical Appendix).

The individual studies were written in a format covering background, insurgency, counterinsurgency, and outcome and conclusions, followed by notes and bibliographic material. The studies have been grouped geographically in three volumes to form casebooks on the subject of internal conflict. In addition, the cases now published plus some further materials collected during their preparation form a data bank for the further analysis of insurgency and counterinsurgency.

Research and writing were
completed in November 1965.

FOREWORD

In the period since World War II, U. S. policy makers and private citizens alike have become increasingly aware of the serious threat to world peace that has been posed by insurgency. This is a complex threat that is imperfectly comprehended. CRESS is making a continuing effort to address itself to this subject in a number of ways; and the study that follows represents one approach to gaining an understanding of the threat.

The present volume is one of three representing 57 separate case studies of internal conflict situations occurring in the 20th century. Of the total cases studied, 17 experiences predated World War II, 11 occurred during World War II, and 29 took place between 1945 and 1965. The locale for 19 of the cases was Asia; for 12, Europe; for 6, the Middle East; for 11, Africa; and for 9, Latin America. The governmental force involved in containing or combating the insurgency also varied: In 16 cases an indigenous government composed of local people fought the insurgents; in 21 cases, it was a foreign authority operating in a colonial role; and in 20 cases, it was a foreign authority operating in an occupying or intervening role.

The large number and variety of cases of internal conflict were each analyzed according to a common methodology. The methodology was framed so as to emphasize the important relationships between military, political, economic, and sociological factors. Thus, these cases are not merely studies of military strategies or tactics in and of themselves, but of strategies and tactics assumed and implemented within the living and untidy complexity of their situational environments.

The importance of these data, from a research point of view, is considerable and obvious. The findings in these casebooks and additional information will now enable us to perform comparative analyses. We thus hope to identify, refine, and present for further research attention some principles that will make possible improved ways of dealing with internal conflict.

It is our belief that the cases will introduce the reader to the wide variety of guises that internal conflict assumes, the broad range of responses that it provokes, and its extensive and pervasive ramifications.

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OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

In a project so large as this, many persons have played important roles. Although it is impossible to acknowledge the contributions of everyone, certain major efforts should be cited.

The research design was reviewed by both in-house and outside experts. Their comments and suggestions were of considerable assistance in detecting and overcoming methodological problems. Foremost among these was Dr. Theodore R. Vallance, Director of the Center for Research in Social Systems, who also acted as division chairman for this project during most of its life. Valuable advice and comments were also supplied by Dr. Earl DeLong, Dr. Ritchie P. Lowry, Dr. William A. Lybrand, Dr. Philip Sperling, Dr. Herbert H. Vreeland, and Dr. Charles Windle.

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Professor Bernard B. Fall was one of the original testers of the methodology and made a number of helpful suggestions. Professor Alphonso Castagno of Boston University, Professor Ralph Powell of The American University, Mrs. Helen Kitchen, editor of Africa Report, and Professor Frank Trager of New York University were especially helpful in suggesting names of persons who might be able to undertake work on the cases in this series. In this connection, we must also gratefully acknowledge the assistance of our authors, who almost without exception helped by suggesting other possible contributors. Many others, too numerous to mention, gave the same kind of aid and assistance.

The review process which the cases underwent could not have been so effective without the judgments of many persons representing a variety of interests and disciplines. Listed below are those who participated in the review of at least one, and in many cases, several manuscripts. Among internal reviewers to whom the project staff is indebted are Dr. Michael C. Conley, Mrs. Judith Hanna, Dr. William Hanna, Mr. Paul Jureidini, Mr. Irving Kaplan, Mr. Norman La-Charité, Dr. Jeanne Muntz, Dr. Andrew Molnar, Col. Richard Moore, Brig. Gen. Frederick P. Munson, Mr. James Pacy, Dr. William Peek, Mr. James Price, Mrs. Priscilla Reining, Mrs. Frances Rintz, Col. Harvey H. Smith, Mr. Philip Springer, Dr. Frederick Stires, Dr. Lorand Szalay, and Miss Lottie Wenner.

The review process was further aided by a number of persons with other office, departmental, and university affiliations who gave generously of their time and effort. Among those whose opinions were of major assistance were Lt. Col. Paul F. Braim; Col. Richard L. Cluttbuck, OBE; Miss Joanne Curtis; Professor Harold E. Davis; J. L. H. Davis, Esq., CBE, DSO; Col. John B. Elting; Lt. Col. David Hughes; Mr. Bernard C. Nalty; Mr. Theodore Olsen; Mr. Peter Riddleberger; Maj. Gen. Roger E. T. St. John, MC; Professor Samuel L. Sharp; Professor Philip B. Taylor; Mr. Pio Uliassi; and Mr. Samuel B. Werner. Special mention should go to Mrs. Jean Eisinger and Mrs. Mary Dell Uliassi, both of whom made many substantive contributions on a number of cases during the preliminary phase of editing.

In any such listing there are still others who gave of their time and effort and whose contribution has been substantial but who for reasons of space or human negligence are not listed. To these unsung heroes go equal quantities of regret for our omission and gratitude for their assistance.

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INTRODUCTION

The publication of this three-volume series, Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict, marks the conclusion of work on the first phase of a study exploring the response of governments to the challenge of insurgent violence. Volume I contains studies of 19 cases reflecting The Experience in Asia; Volume II comprises 18 cases concerning The Experience in Europe and the Middle East; and Volume III, with 20 cases, describes The Experience in Africa and Latin America. Although the 57 cases occurred over a wide range of geographic areas and under a variety of social, economic, and political systems, in every instance the threat to the existence of the government in power was such that military forces were involved in maintaining or restoring order within the area.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study, performed under U. S. army aegis, was, in the broadest sense, to learn and profit from the past. Although the army in the early 1960's was directly or indirectly engaged in checking insurgency in various countries, notably in South Viet-Nam, there was no institutional memory bank upon which it could call to review either its own experience or that of other armies. The experience of experts was available, but even here there were difficulties. Not only did time tend to blur memories, but even when precise data were available, they could not always be correctly extrapolated to fit another case. When this study was begun in early 1963, comparative analysis of counterinsurgency was impossible on a broad scale: There were neither a sufficient number of studies nor a sufficient degree of analogy between those that had been done. Furthermore, earlier work had focused mainly on underground and insurgent operations* rather than on the counteractivities of government. Three specific purposes thus emerged: to focus on governmental response or counterinsurgency, to enlarge the number of cases under study, and to provide for comparability of data so as to broaden the base for future analysis.

* See, for example, such studies as Case Study in Guerrilla War--Greece During World War II (published in 1961), Casebook on Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: 23 Summary Accounts (1962), Case Studies in Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: Algeria 1954-1962 (1963), Case Studies in Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: Cuba 1953-1959 (1963), Case Studies in Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: Vietnam 1941-1954 (1964), Case Studies in Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: Guatemala 1944-1954 (1964), and Undergrounds in Insurgent, Revolutionary, and Resistance Warfare (1963). All these studies were published by the Special Operations Research Office, predecessor of the present Center.

The project was planned as a three-phase study. The aim of the first phase of the work, which culminates in publication of the three volumes in the present series, was to identify counterinsurgency campaigns, to select from the total body of known cases those most useful for study, to analyze individually each selected case according to a standardized methodology, and to prepare case studies. In the second phase of the work, the data will be utilized to analyze on a comparative basis the strategic factors that operated in insurgency-counterinsurgency situations and to identify those tactical factors that were critical to the outcome of each case. The third phase of the work will be to study and analyze those specific tactical factors identified as critical—such possible tactics as resettlement, border control, jungle fighting, or treatment of captured and surrendered guerrillas.

The 57 case studies that constitute the first phase of this work are intended to present the reader with a broad overview of the major strategic and tactical factors bearing on each specific situation and to indicate some of the complexity of interplay between, for example, economic and sociological, political and military factors. There has been no attempt to probe intensively and in depth any specific component of a given campaign. Rather, the purpose has been to provide a point of first contact in the study of internal conflict situations.

The casebooks as presented bring together in ordered and coherent form a mass of formerly uncoordinated and fragmented data. From the research viewpoint, the series provides a data base for further study and analysis. From the military viewpoint, the studies should prove useful in instruction and orientation, as background for policy papers and contingency plans, and as a basis for the development of doctrine. From a still larger and less specifically utilitarian viewpoint, these volumes may also help in the continuing work of comprehending and assessing the role of the military in the critical area of governmental response to the challenge of internal conflict.

A MEANING OF "COUNTERINSURGENCY"

The initial research problem was to define the elements involved in the governmental response, or counterinsurgency, in terms that would have validity from both operational and research viewpoints. The problem was partly semantic in nature. Webster defined neither "governmental response" nor "counterinsurgency," but the meaning of the latter could presumably be derived by juxtaposing "counter," meaning "against," and "insurgency," meaning in international law "a revolt against a government not reaching the proportions of an organized revolution, and not recognized as belligerency." This definition left much to be desired insofar as the research project was concerned.

The word "counterinsurgency" was, indeed, fairly new in U. S. military usage, having been coined some time after 1958* to give coherence and meaning to actions in which U. S. military forces were becoming increasingly involved. In the February 1962 edition of military definitions published by The Joint Chiefs of Staff, counterinsurgency was defined as "the entire scope of actions (military, police, political, economic, psychological, etc.) taken by or in conjunction with the existing government of a nation to counteract, contain, or defeat an insurgency."† This definition was in effect when work on this project started.

This broad definition still left some questions unresolved. For example, what constituted an "insurgency"? What was a counterinsurgent government? On what particular actions within the "entire scope of actions" should the study be focused? To clarify these difficulties, it may be well to explain some of the research interpretations that were placed upon the official definition.

What Constituted "Insurgency"?

Concerning the matter of insurgency, it was difficult to define the criteria that distinguished it. In the view of some students, insurgents had to possess an organization, use illegal methods, and advocate a political program; lacking such characteristics, practitioners of violence remained simply badmen, terrorists, or bandits. But since the first two criteria, organization and use of illegal methods, were not limited to insurgents and indeed were common among bandits and terrorists, they did not distinguish insurgency. In the case of the third criterion, possession of a political program, the study planners believed that this was irrelevant from the point of view of the counterinsurgent government.

Did it really matter to a government whether it would be overthrown by violent persons with a political program or by violent persons without a political program? In the latter event, would not the result be political anarchy, or, in the functional sense, another type of political system? More usually, of course, any so-called nonpolitical insurgents who approached victory suddenly discovered or found thrust upon them a political program. In any event, from the point of view of the government, what counted was not the political change that would result after its downfall so much as the immediate threat to its existence.

* The word did not appear in the March 1958 edition of the Dictionary of United States Military Terms for Joint Usage.

† U. S. JCS, Dictionary of United States Military Terms for Joint Usage (JCS Pub 1; Washington: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, February 1962), p. 58. Newer terms currently replace the word "counterinsurgency" in military usage—for example, "stability operations," which in turn was replaced by "internal defense/development." Once work on this study started, there was no attempt to keep up with the latest semantic developments since the study is concerned with probing the concepts and operations of the past rather than making policy for the future.

In this study, therefore, it was assumed that governmental reaction to internal violence, whether the latter was politically or nonpolitically motivated and programmed, was counterinsurgent in nature. Thus the critical element in an insurgency was defined as the threat that it presented to the viability of the government--i.e., its credibility, its legitimacy, its ability to function.

What Was a Counterinsurgent Government?

Since, by the JCS definition, counterinsurgency included all actions "taken by or in conjunction with the existing government," a counterinsurgent government might be either an indigenous regime or a foreign power in an occupying, colonial, or supporting role. Although questions of legality might color the definition of a counterinsurgent government, for the researcher the test had to be that of function.

For example, the question of legality was important in those cases which occurred during World War II. In these instances, the legally constituted prewar governments of the Nazi-invaded and -occupied nations of Europe existed in exile, recognized by the Allied Powers, while puppet governments were formed within the occupied nations to carry on the administration of the country under the Axis occupation. But since the puppet governments actually performed the role of governing, they were regarded, for purposes of this study, as counterinsurgents when acting against resistance forces organized within their countries. Furthermore, the occupying powers within such countries, acting against resistance forces either alone or in conjunction with the puppet governments, also functioned as counterinsurgents.

For the purposes of this research project both the legal problems inherent in the concurrent existence of governments-in-exile and the dubious legality of foreign aggression were thus disregarded. The institutions and forces that functioned as the de facto government of a country were held to qualify as counterinsurgent, both by definition and by role.

What Was the Study Focus?

A third consideration involved the matter of emphasis within a study whose subject by definition embraced "the entire scope of actions (military, police, political, economic, psychological, etc.). . . ." The occurrence of insurgency within a state indeed suggested a society in turmoil, in which a significant number of the people were in revolt, and in which every counterinsurgent action might operate to influence and to be influenced by every part of the society, in a continuous circle of interaction. Measures taken on the economic level could affect political decisions which then influenced military action. Conversely, military actions affected other spheres. Even the bearing and discipline of troops, let alone the orders of the troop commander, produced important changes in the climate of acceptance or non-acceptance of the governmental response. Life for the military counterinsurgent became a series of interfaces between the many overlapping

phases of the total endeavor, in which it was difficult to determine cause and effect or to separate the purely military from the purely political or purely economic.

In research, as in life, it was difficult, if not impossible, to divide the counterinsurgency effort into entirely separate spheres. Despite this, it was the intent and endeavor of this project to emphasize the military aspect of counterinsurgency even while attempting to indicate its relationship to political, economic, and social causes and effects. Thus, whatever the implied equality of emphasis in the JCS definition, the stress in this study was upon military aspects of "the entire scope of actions."

SOME ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING THE STUDY

Any definition or concept of insurgency and counterinsurgency presupposes a certain philosophical point of view about the role of government and governmental opposition and about the role of internal violence in a state. Some of the assumptions implicit and explicit within the terms of reference of this study should therefore be examined. Assumptions bearing on at least three important aspects of the subject need some clarification: the matter of morality, the matter of role reversal, and the matter of preventive counterinsurgency.

A Research View of the Morality of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency

When this study began, there were persons for whom the word "counterinsurgency" had (and may still have) moral overtones. To some, counterinsurgency seemed a "good" thing, done by "good" governments, with the "good" objectives of alleviating grievances and implementing desirable change while obviating undue violence and the chance of undesirable political results. They were able to hold this view, it should be noted, only by semantic juggling. The same actions, when taken by a "bad" government, became something other than counterinsurgency.

To others who considered the subject, counterinsurgency had an image ranging from "unwise" to "bad." Implicitly, these persons appeared to accept all insurgency as basically "good."

From the research viewpoint, danger seemed to lurk in both views. The view that counterinsurgency is "good"—and the concomitant refusal to call a function by its name when it is performed by a disliked institution or government—certainly seemed to circumscribe and distort one's perception of reality. On the other hand, the view that counterinsurgency is "bad" per se seemed to imply a roseate and unrealistic view of insurgency and to deny to government the pragmatic and functional requisite of self-preservation. Further, to view counterinsurgency as either totally "good" or totally "bad" seemed to preclude the possibility that "good" governments might use "bad" measures, or that "bad" governments might sometimes use "good" ones. To speculate along a scale of "good" and "bad" appeared fruitless.

The position taken in this study was that counterinsurgency might be undertaken by either "good" or "bad" governments in an assorted mix of "good" and "bad" ways, and that—whatever

political or moral approval or opprobrium might accrue to the government in question—counterinsurgency, as a function of government, remained a proper subject for inquiry and study. The terms "insurgency" and "counterinsurgency" were therefore accepted in their operational and nonmoralistic sense—as descriptive words used to name a type of violent opposition to government and a generic function of government, with no implications of morality or immorality. In this view, counterinsurgent governments might be either good or bad, they might be of any political persuasion, and the insurgents they combat might or might not have just cause for rebellion.

Role Reversal: Semantics vs. Function

It would not be necessary to mention the matter of role reversal but for the fact that the public image of a successful rebel has so often become stereotyped that, even after an insurgent has assumed the reins of government, he is still viewed as an insurgent. The semantic problem involved in the failure to recognize the reversal of role from insurgent to counterinsurgent is complicated by Communist practice and doctrine, which have been loathe to give up the "population snatching" appeals of the insurgent line even after governmental power has been attained.*

Thus, for example, one could find references to Fidel Castro as a "revolutionary" long after his ascension to power in Cuba. Indeed, Prime Minister Castro speaks of himself as a revolutionist and of his government as revolutionary. Let no one think, however, that any further insurgency against the insurgents-turned-government will be tolerated; when Castro appeals to Cubans to follow his "revolution," this is no call to insurgency, but exactly the opposite. Nonetheless, Castro's image was to many still that of an insurgent leader long after his function within Cuba became that of counterinsurgent.

Not only do the insurgents-turned-government attempt to maintain the appeal of their "insurgent" status, but their enemies, the legitimists, often maintain the same fiction. Furthermore, international recognition of the new government often lags behind the reality of its existence. As a result, there is a tacit conspiracy of propaganda in which both the new government and its enemies attempt to maintain the idea that it is still the aspiring insurgent-revolutionist.

Whatever the values of such a position, it is, for the purposes of research, unreal and unrealistic. In the present study, the view has been taken that function is the test of insurgent and of counterinsurgent: When the insurgent has taken over the powers of government and is the only government functioning within the area of the country, he is no longer regarded as insurgent, but as counterinsurgent.

* For a description of this, see Chapter Four, "The U. S. S. R. (1917-1921)."

"Preventive" Counterinsurgency Not Studied

During the period of conceptualizing the study plan, note was taken of an early working definition of counterinsurgency which had included all "... activities directed toward preventing or suppressing..." insurgency against "a duly established government."*

The crucial word was "preventing," and the definition thus raised the specter of including "preventive" counterinsurgency in the study. The concept had had wide acceptance among many persons involved in the field. Indeed, in certain circles it was practically dogma that the insurgency most effectively controlled was that which was never allowed to occur. One could hardly argue the point. On the other hand, it left the problem of how to identify those cases so successfully managed that they never existed.

In its broadest sense, "preventive" counterinsurgency might well be viewed as all those steps taken to ensure institution and maintenance of good and popular government. But if every tax cut, to use a possible example, might be viewed as a "preventive" counterinsurgent measure, the result would be an almost infinite number of cases. Furthermore, how could it be established that an insurgency would inevitably have occurred if a given step, e. g., the tax cut, had not been taken? To identify cases of "preventive" counterinsurgency implied both judgmental infallibility and historical inevitability—to the first of which, the study planners could not lay claim; to the second of which, they did not subscribe.

As a result, no attempt has been made within this study to try to outguess history. In every case that was studied, insurgency did occur and military preparations to deal with it were made and carried out.

SELECTION OF CASES

Given the JCS definition, the study interpretations, and certain assumptions as an indispensable starting point, work began on the selection of cases to be studied. The first and most obvious task was to list possible cases so as to get an idea of the size of the work. But listing cases was not quite so simple as it appeared. By definition, of course, wars between sovereign states were automatically excluded. On the other hand, the JCS definition had not set a minimum or maximum for the scope of internal conflict in insurgency or counterinsurgency.

A Rough "Minimax" Scale of Violence

In creating a list of counterinsurgency cases, the study planners were forced to set a rough working scale for the minimum and maximum of governmental reaction that would be considered "counterinsurgency." Below the minimum, the governmental response was considered too weak

* Incl., "Terminology Relating to Cold War Activities," w/ltr, Secy of the Genl Staff, subj.: Terminology Relative to Cold War Activities, 19 Feb 62 (CS 312. 7 (19 Feb 62)).

or short-lived to be studied fruitfully; above the maximum, the governmental response took on the characteristics of conventional warfare. Only those cases were considered in which the government clearly recognized the threat to its existence or in which the outbreak of armed conflict clearly demonstrated the threat, with or without governmental recognition. In this connection, the coup d'état was regarded as a case to be excluded from a study of counterinsurgency, since governmental response in this situation was usually minimal or even nonexistent. At the other extreme, counterinsurgency in which conventional warfare tactics predominated, as in the Spanish Civil War of the 1930's, seemed inappropriate for this study. Thus a kind of rough "minimax" scale was developed for deciding which cases to list.

Only 20th Century Cases Considered

For several reasons, the list was further confined to cases occurring in the 20th century. First, there already existed a number of studies on the 19th century experience. Moreover, the conditions underlying the earlier experiences were so remote from present-day terms of reference that it was felt little good could be derived from their study. The number of cases occurring between 1900 and 1939 was undoubtedly sufficient to clarify any significant differences imposed by the technological revolution that has taken place since the start of World War II.

Within the guidelines sketched above, the research planners therefore set about listing cases that might be studied. This was accomplished through in-house brainstorming, consultation with area experts, and some library research. At the time, when counterinsurgency was still being talked about in terms of eight or so cases, it seemed mildly surprising, and then somewhat amazing, that the list grew to 25, 50, then 100 and more cases, with the end nowhere in sight.

Emphasis on Military Operations

The large number of cases in the original list indicated a strong need for a further selection process. Four additional criteria were used to select from the unwieldy list those counterinsurgency cases that would yield the most useful results from a research standpoint.

The first criterion was based upon the assumption that the U. S. army's greatest interest lay in those instances where another army had been called upon to perform a major counterinsurgent role. Here the experience of the past certainly had the greatest analogy and pertinence to future campaigns in which the U. S. army might have to function. The first cases chosen from the list were therefore those in which military operations had lasted one year or more. About 87 percent of the cases finally selected fell within this category.

A second selection criterion was to take those cases in which major powers were involved, specifically where troops of the United States or the Soviet Union had been used in external counterinsurgency situations, as in the U. S. role in Lebanon and the U. S. S. R. role in Hungary. A third criterion was to take cases of particular interest to the army or of special value for research purposes. The second and third criteria accounted for about 13 percent of the cases.

A final and overriding criterion was to accept for study only those cases for which data were available in unclassified sources and for which qualified persons would agree to undertake the work. These requirements disqualified a number of otherwise acceptable cases.

In essence, the JCS definition, its interpretation, and certain assumptions underlying a specific concept of counterinsurgency determined the cases to be included in the long list of situations suitable for study. In turn, this list was narrowed by the imposition of additional criteria to determine those counterinsurgency cases that would yield the most useful research results. In the final process, 57 cases were selected for study. *

Alphabetical List of the 57 Cases

The cases included Algeria (1954-1962), Angola (1961 to 1965), Arabia (1916-1918), Burma (1942-1945), Burma (1948-1960), Cameroon (1955-1962), China (1898-1901), China (1927-1937), China (1937-1945), Colombia (1948-1958), Cuba (1906-1909), Cuba (1953-1959), Cyprus (1954-1958), Dominican Republic (1916-1924), East Germany (June 1953), Ethiopia (1937-1941), France (1940-1944), Greece (1942-1944), Greece (1946-1949), Haiti (1918-1920), Haiti (1958-1964), Hungary (October-November 1956), Indochina (1946-1954), Indonesia (1946-1949), Indonesia (1958-1961), Iraq (1961-1964), Ireland (1916-1921), Israel (1945-1948), Italy (1943-1945), Jammu and Kashmir (1947-1949), Kenya (1952-1960), Laos (1959-1962), Lebanon (1958), Madagascar (1947-1948), Malaya (1942-1945), Malaya (1948-1960), Mexico (1916-1917), Morocco (1921-1926), Nicaragua (1927-1933), Norway (1940-1945), Outer Mongolia (1919-1921), Palestine (1933-1939), Philippines (1899-1902), Philippines (1942-1945), Philippines (1946-1954), Poland (1939-1944), Portuguese Guinea (1959 to 1965), South Africa (1899-1902), South Africa (1961 to 1964), South Korea (1948-1954), South Viet-Nam (1956 to November 1963), South-West Africa (1904-1907), Tibet (1951-1960), U. S. S. R. (1917-1921), U. S. S. R. (1941-1944), Venezuela (1958-1963), and Yugoslavia (1941-1944).

D. M. Condit
Bert H. Cooper

* For a description of the research methodology used in this study, see the Technical Appendix.

Part One
EARLY CENTURY EXPERIENCE

CHINA (1898-1901)

CHINA (1927-1937)

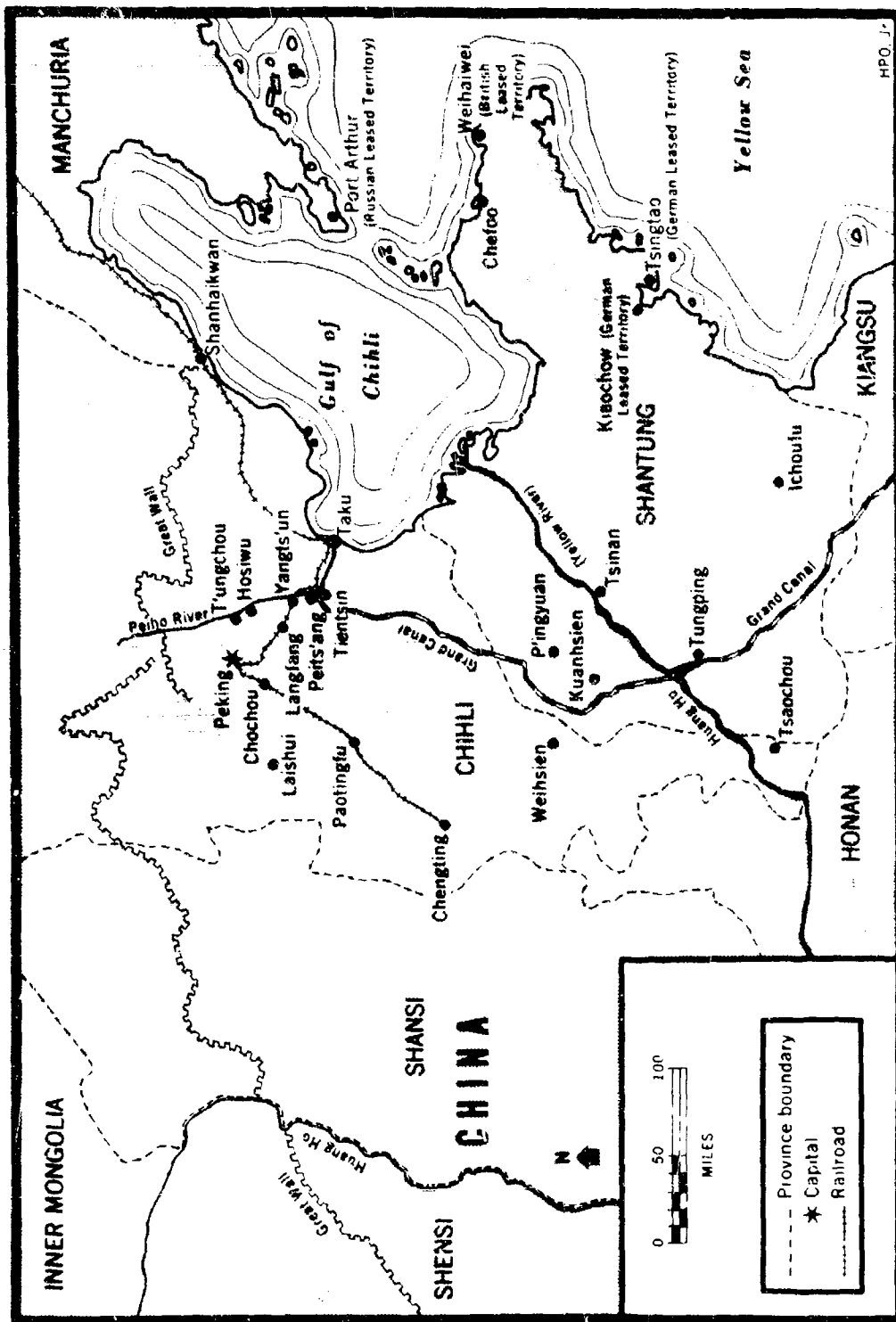
OUTER MONGOLIA (1919-1921)

THE PHILIPPINES (1899-1902)

Chapter One

CHINA
1898-1901

by Chester Tan



NORTH CHINA (1898-1901)

Chapter One

CHINA (1898-1901)

by Chester Tan

At the turn of the century a fanatically xenophobic politico-religious insurgent group, popularly known as the Boxers, brought Imperial China to the brink of civil war and involved China's reactionary Manchu dynasty in armed conflict with the foreign powers, including the United States, in the Peking-Tientsin area.

BACKGROUND

The Chinese have been reputed to be an easily ruled people, and China has had long periods of peace in its history. Confucian principles of benevolence and righteousness helped soften the harsh rule of absolute monarchy; and the Confucian teaching of filial piety counseled against revolt, for in failure a rebel disgraced his family and endangered the lives of his parents. Nevertheless, rebellions have been fairly common in China's past, often occurring in times of famine and flood or as reactions to governmental misrule and corruption. In the middle of the 19th century, for example, the great Taiping Rebellion devastated the Empire's most fertile provinces for the 15 years from 1851 to 1866. In the Boxer uprising of 1898, however, there was a xenophobic element unknown in the peasant revolts of the past.

During the latter part of the 19th century, antforeign sentiment, a product of close involvement with foreign merchants, missionaries, and officials, had been steadily growing among the Chinese. After defeat by the British in the Opium War (1839-42), China had been forced to sign a number of humiliating treaties which undermined its economy and compromised its national sovereignty. It was compelled to open more of its ports for foreign trade; to maintain low tariffs on foreign imports of manufactured goods; and to allow foreign merchants residing in China to remain under the jurisdiction of European consular officials, a system known as extraterritoriality.

In the period from 1858 to 1860, the British and French forced China to make additional concessions, including the right of foreign diplomats to reside permanently at the Imperial capital city of Peking—a demand that may not have seemed unusual to Europeans but which appeared

unnatural and outlandish to the Chinese. During the last half of the 19th century, China's traditional vassal states and colonial dependencies of Indochina, Korea, and Formosa were lost one after another. And after China's crushing defeat in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95), a new wave of foreign aggression set in. Leased territories, spheres of interest, and concessions to build railroads were forced upon China in rapid succession by Great Britain, France, Russia, Germany, and other foreign powers. In 1898, there was serious talk of China's partition by these powers.

Some Effects of Foreign Inroads

The people in North China, where the Boxer movement originated, had firsthand experience with the harsh methods of the foreigners. The authorities in the German-leased territory of Kiaochow, in Shantung Province, marched troops into Chinese areas at the slightest provocation, often burning villages to the ground.¹ Numerous conflicts, particularly in lawsuits, between Christian and non-Christian Chinese were often traceable to interference by European missionaries. Also, Christian practices were frequently not compatible with Chinese customs. For example, Chinese Christians were forbidden to participate in any village ceremonies or community festivals where there was a suggestion of honoring "false gods." Their refusal to conform to the customs of the country was keenly resented by their fellow villagers, particularly in Shantung and Chihli,* where the countryfolk were proud of their Confucian heritage.

The influx of foreign capital had serious effects on the economic life of the nation. China's traditional craftsmen and weavers, for example, could not hope to compete with foreign manufactures. The building of railroads in the metropolitan area of Peking resulted in unemployment for thousands of people who made their living in connection with the junks that sailed along the Grand Canal. Besides, a popular belief existed that the railroads, in traversing graves in the countryside, outraged the spirits of the ancestors and thereby spoiled the fortunes of the family.²

Some Internal Problems

Other conditions further upset social stability in conservative northern China during 1898-99. In Shantung and Chihli, flood and famine were severe, and the situation was rendered the more unbearable by the corruption and inefficiency with which local authorities handled relief.³ In the resultant unrest, any local incident could easily have led to large-scale disturbances.

The Government of China was at this time an absolute monarchy, ruled by the decadent Manchu dynasty, over 250 years old. Actual power was in the hands of a conservative clique of Manchu princes and courtiers led by the Empress Dowager Tz'u Hsi. "Old Buddha," as the Chinese called the crafty dowager, had little awareness of the real problems facing China; but she had an uncanny ability at intrigue and maintained her personal power over the Imperial

*Chihli is now called Hopei Province.

Court for more than 40 years (1862-1908). In the summer of 1898, she demonstrated her prowess when her nephew, the Emperor Kuang Hsü, proclaimed a number of long overdue administrative reforms. His efforts were cut short when conservative officials objected, and the Empress seized the occasion to engineer a coup d'état. Kuang Hsü's advisers were exiled or put to death, and the Emperor himself was made a lifelong prisoner of the Empress.

INSURGENCY

In May 1898, the I-ho Ch'uan (Fists of Righteous Harmony), or Boxers, first appeared in districts along the border between Chihli and Shantung provinces. There they distributed leaflets demanding the extermination of Chinese Christians, whom they called secondary devils; later they called for the expulsion of all foreigners, the primary devils. Although their main target was the foreign element in China, the Boxers in their early struggles with the local troops also opposed the Government of China.

Early official reports about the Boxer societies stated that they were simply volunteer social organizations practicing boxing and gymnastics in the traditional Chinese fashion. There is evidence, however, that even at an early stage the Boxers were closely associated with the so-called heretical sects and secret societies, both of which had existed in China for centuries. The Chinese name of the Boxer movement was identical with that of a sect which had operated in Chihli sometime after 1810, and a number of captured Boxers admitted their semireligious connections.

The Boxers also had certain similarities to the secret societies. When China was conquered by the Manchus in the 17th century, many of the supporters of the previous Ming dynasty (1368-1644) had joined secret societies. The original aim of restoring the Ming dynasty was forgotten, but the secret societies remained. Although vigorously suppressed by the Manchu government, these societies had managed to survive underground and had infiltrated deep into various social levels. The Chinese had joined with various motives. A government report stated that "the stupid . . . consider it a means of protecting their lives and families, but the dishonest . . . seize the opportunity to indulge in violence."⁴ At any rate, whenever serious riots occurred, the secret societies had often played a part. The rules of the Boxer movement were typical of those of the secret societies and sects—for instance, in emphasis on obedience to orders, violation of which could incur death or even extermination of whole families.

In October 1898, a number of Boxers gathered around Weihsien and Kuanhsien, where they attacked Chinese Christians and pillaged and set fire to their houses. Vigilante operations and lynch mob tactics were continued by the Boxers throughout 1898 and 1899 in the rural areas of Shantung and Chihli, where governmental authority was weak or nonexistent. Their victims were chiefly Chinese converts to Christianity. At times, the Boxer insurgents assembled as many as 1,000 men, but they usually dispersed at the approach of government troops. Operating

along the Shantung-Chihli border, the Boxers enjoyed an obvious advantage of maneuverability. When hard pressed in Chihli, they slipped into Shantung; and when pursued by the local troops of that province, they conveniently moved back into Chihli.

Extent and Appeal of the Boxer Movement

The xenophobic ideology of the Boxers had its greatest appeal among the conservative peoples of North China, who vehemently resented the mounting foreign dominance in their area. A significant force in only 2 of China's 18 provinces, the Boxer movement, with its anti-Christian and antiforeign slogans, greatly appealed to the ignorant peasants of Shantung and Chihli. * The Boxers' use of violence and magic may have alienated the peaceful and rational, but it attracted the intrepid and superstitious. When the Imperial Court relaxed its earlier opposition to the Boxers and certain powerful Manchu courtiers expressed their personal approval in early 1900, the movement spread like wildfire among the people of the northern provinces.⁵

The antforeign stand of the Boxers also attracted the sympathy of many conservative officials, such as Yu Hsien, whose support during his tenure as governor of Shantung encouraged the spread of the movement in that province. His influence in the Imperial Court contributed to the change of government policy from suppression to appeasement and, later, active collaboration with the Boxers. He also played an important part in diverting the Boxers' aims. Dropping the government as a target, the Boxers concentrated on fighting the foreigners—eventually in cooperation with the Manchu government itself.

Organization and Recruitment

The Boxers were organized into t'uan, or bands, each with a membership between several tens and several hundreds. Each t'uan set up a t'an, or headquarters, usually in a temple at the village or in some house in the city. A t'an was headed by a leader called Ta-shuai, or Lao Shih-fu, who had absolute authority over his followers. In the cities, a t'an usually controlled a certain area in the neighborhood, although jurisdictions were never clearly demarcated and could easily overlap.⁶

At the headquarters, which served as paramilitary outposts and administrative centers for the movement, altars and shrines were erected, before which incense was burned and banners

* Boxers found their way to Manchuria at a later date: there were no serious reports about them before June 1900. It was only after they had been organized, in accordance with the Imperial order of June 23, to support Chinese troops that they took an active part in hostilities against the foreigners and the Russians along the South Manchurian Railway. The distance of the frontier area from China's political and cultural center, its different socioeconomic conditions, and its lack of a strong antforeign sentiment made it difficult for the Boxers to build up strength there at the early stage. (See Ch'ing-chi wai-chiao shih-liao (Historical Material on Foreign Relations in the Latter Part of the Ch'ing Dynasty), Peiping, 1932-33, 144/22.)

unfurled. Such semireligious ceremonies also performed an important propaganda function by attracting the attention of the idle and of curious passers-by. Boxer headquarters were distribution centers for leaflets and placards proclaiming the movement's vitriolic message. They also served as training centers for Boxer recruits.

Prior to 1900, most of the Boxers were recruited from among the peasants in the countryside. Later, when the movement spread to Peking and Tientsin, it began to draw on the most turbulent and unruly elements of the population in these teeming cities. Appealing to the patriotic sentiments of the masses, the Boxers told them it was the will of China's ancient gods that they join Boxer societies to save the nation from foreign domination. Pressure was brought to bear on the hesitant and uncooperative, and prospective recruits were warned that disaster would visit those who refused to join the insurgent nationalist movement.

The Boxers wore as their uniform a red turban, a red sash crossing the chest, and a red tape tying their trousers at the ankle. They armed themselves with any sort of military equipment that was available; spears, pikes, swords, matchlocks, bows and arrows, shields, and armor.

Magic and Training

Playing upon the superstitions of the people, the Boxers claimed to have magical powers which would protect their members in combat against the foreign devils. Like the heretical sects, the Boxers made extensive use of charms and incantations, and their intricate rituals invoked the assistance of traditional gods and legendary figures. Their military training consisted of gymnastic exercises and religious ceremonies. In addition to boxing and other traditional gymnastics, they were required to perform such ceremonies as bowing low, striking the forehead on the ground three times toward the east and three times toward the south, and going through a number of postures as though warding off blows and making passes at an opponent. Recruits were told that if they performed these exercises each day for from three to six months, they would be invulnerable to bullets and swords.⁷

Women's Auxiliary: The Red Lanterns

The Boxer membership was entirely male, but in May 1900 an affiliated organization for women called the Red Lanterns (Hung Teng Chao) appeared in Paotingfu. Red Lantern societies developed quickly in the Tientsin area after the government decided to make use of the Boxers. These women, while not using swords and spears, claimed to possess magical powers for jamming enemy cannon at a distance and setting fire to buildings merely by waving their red handkerchiefs. The Red Lanterns were all under the single command of Huang Lien Sheng Wu (Yellow Lotus Holy Mother), the daughter of a boatman.⁸ There were also Boxer organizations for widows, known as the Blue Lanterns and the Green Lanterns.⁹

Leadership and Fighting Ability

There was never a supreme leader at the head of the Boxer movement, although there were several prominent local leaders. In 1899, Chu Hung-teng was a noted chief of a Boxer group in Shantung, and in 1900 Li Lai-chung was a key figure in Peking, while Chang Te-cheng and Ts'ao Fu-tien led the Tientsin Boxers. The Boxers were given more formal organization and leadership in June 1900, when the Imperial Court at Peking appointed Prince Chuang, Prefect of Police in the Peking metropolitan area, and Grand Councillor Kang I to serve as "commanders" of the Boxer forces in Peking.¹⁰

The Boxers' chief strength originally lay in their simple and often informal organization. The membership could be disbanded in time of adversity and readily mobilized again when the need arose. Magic, superstition, loyalty, and the threat of severe reprisal for any betrayal cemented the bonds of comradeship among members.

Largely because of their lack of organization and poor coordination, however, the Boxers proved to be highly inadequate as a fighting force. Except for one highly successful guerrilla-type ambush in June 1900 and some harassing attacks against the allied foreign forces, the Boxers never really advanced beyond the tactics of mob violence and terrorism. Arson remained a favorite tactic: during the sieges of Peking and Tientsin, they set fire to railroad and telegraph stations and to houses and buildings in the foreign settlements.¹¹ They never became an effective disciplined force. Even their incorporation into the Imperial Army did little to improve the tactical situation, as the Viceroy of Tientsin was to discover during the battles with the foreign expeditionary forces. Viceroy Yu Lu complained bitterly that the Boxers would not carry out his orders for concerted action against the foreign forces.¹² In the military action at Tientsin in July 1900, the Boxers proved themselves far inferior to Chinese regulars, who on occasion showed courage and aggressiveness.¹³ The Boxers, however, were easily demoralized in the face of disaster and tended to vanish quickly whenever the fighting became intense.¹⁴

The total strength of the Boxer insurgents before 1900 was probably several thousand, but precise figures are not available. In June 1900, there were reportedly some 30,000 Boxers in Tientsin and an equal number in Peking.¹⁵ On the basis of the meager and scattered official Chinese reports available, it appears that some 70 Boxers were killed prior to May 1900. There was a major battle with Chinese troops at the beginning of June, however, in which Boxer casualties were reported by the government as "many." Boxer losses during the siege of the foreign legations in Peking and in the fighting around Tientsin are unknown, since the insurgents had by that time been organized into the Chinese Imperial Army, which made no distinction between regular casualties and those of its Boxer auxiliaries.¹⁶

The Boxers regarded all foreigners collectively as barbarians and inferiors, and they saw Chinese Christians as traitors. Their strategy was equally simple and direct—to kill as many as possible of the foreigners and Chinese "traitors" in their midst. Totally unaware of the vast retaliatory power that stood behind the small handful of foreign residents in China, the Boxers made no effort at selectivity or at dividing the foreign powers against each other.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

In the course of the Boxer troubles there were two distinct and different phases that might be termed "counterinsurgency." The first lasted from 1898 to June 1900; during this period, the Chinese Government dealt with the Boxer insurgents first by military suppression, then by conciliation, and finally by incorporating them into the regular army. The second and better known phase occurred in the summer of 1900, when six foreign powers with special interests in China sent an international expeditionary force into the country to counter the Boxer attacks.

When reports of the Boxer movement first reached the Imperial Court in the spring of 1898, the Chinese Government ordered local authorities to maintain peace and order in their territories. In October, when the Boxers began attacking Chinese Christians in rural districts of Shantung and Chihli, government troops were dispatched to the scene. Viceroy Yu Lu of Chihli ordered provincial authorities to put down the riots and arrest Boxer leaders, dispersing their followers. Suppressed in Chihli, the Boxers crossed the border into Shantung. There they were likewise defeated by government troops at Weihsien, where 4 Boxers were killed and 16 captured.

Varying Official Reactions

With the appointment of Yu Hsien as governor of Shantung in March 1899, the fortunes of the Boxers took a turn for the better. A capable Manchu official, Yu Hsien was also strongly antiforeign. He saw in the Boxers a patriotic force which might profitably be used by the Manchu dynasty in its struggle with the foreign powers. In October, when a group of Boxers led by Chu Hung-teng were routed by the local troops in P'ingyuan, Yu Hsien removed the magistrate and the local commander responsible for the Boxers' defeat. This action was construed by the Boxers as a sign of approval and they returned with renewed force. In western Shantung there now appeared a number of new Boxer societies, each consisting of several hundred members. Under diplomatic pressure, however, the Chinese Government finally summoned Yu Hsien back to Peking and appointed Yuan Shih-k'ai as the acting governor of Shantung.

Yuan immediately began a vigorous suppression of the Boxers. One of his orders stated that, "if fathers or elder brothers let their sons or younger brothers join the Boxers, the sons or younger brothers will be executed, while the father or elder brothers will be imprisoned for three years."¹ Village headmen who failed to report any Boxer establishments in their villages were liable to imprisonment for from one to three years, and informants who reported such

establishments to the government were rewarded with half of the property of the family on whose land the Boxer establishment was located, the rest being confiscated.¹⁸ By such drastic measures, Yuan soon succeeded in clearing Shantung of Boxers, many of whom moved to the neighboring province of Chihli.

For some time local authorities in Chihli acted energetically against the Boxers. In December 1899, the five magistrates of Fuch'eng, Chingchou, Kuch'eng, Wuch'iao, and Tungkuang held a conference and resolved that vigorous action be taken to suppress the Boxers. In addition to proposing severe punishment for the ringleaders, the resolution also recommended exposing the true nature of the Boxers as "heretical" sects, so that people would not be deceived into joining them. Unfortunately, the magistrates' proposals did not receive strong support from Viceroy Yu Lu, who apparently had learned by this time that the Imperial Court was contemplating a more conciliatory policy toward the Boxers.¹⁹

Government Policy Allows Boxer Movement to Grow

In the course of 1899, the government's Boxer policy was gradually modified. A definite change occurred toward the end of 1899, around the time when Governor Yu Hsien of Shantung returned to Peking. He seems to have gained the ear of the Imperial Court with his idea of using the Boxers as patriots to fight foreign aggression. A decree issued in January 1900 distinguished between "good" and "evil" Boxers. The government's policy was now to "punish the evil Boxers who stirred up disturbances and disperse the innocent ones who practiced boxing merely for self-protection." At the same time, the government declared that Chinese Christians were also children of the Imperial throne, but directed local officials to settle legal disputes judiciously and without special favor to Christians.²⁰ These conciliatory moves did nothing to check the growth of the insurgent Boxer movement, which was soon to spread from the provinces into Peking.²¹

The Boxers, noting the shift in Imperial policy, assumed even bolder tactics. From southern Chihli, they rapidly spread northward to Tientsin, Ichoufu, and Paotingfu, in some places assembling as many as several thousand men. In May 1900, they staged a major riot in Laishui, burning 75 houses and killing 68 Christians. A provincial force dispatched to the scene was ambushed and its commander killed. Although this was a direct challenge to the provincial government, Viceroy Yu Lu refused to take retaliatory measures. As result, more and more people joined the insurgents.²²

By the end of May, the Boxers were setting fires along the Paotingfu and the Peking-Tientsin railroads and attacking foreigners as well as Chinese Christians. Hitherto, local or provincial forces had been sent to cope with the Boxers, but now a large force under the command of Gen. Nieh Shih-ch'eng arrived to protect the railroads. In the pitched battle that ensued, several hundred Boxers were killed.²³

Foreign Alarm at Boxer Operations

At this point, the foreign legations in Peking played into the Boxers' hands. On learning of the attack on the railroads, the ministers decided at a conference on May 28, 1900, that marine guards should be brought to Peking to protect the legations. Accordingly, and contrary to the Chinese Government's stipulation that no more than 30 men for each legation be sent, a detachment of 75 Russian, 75 British, 75 French, 50 American, 40 Italian, and 25 Japanese marines arrived in Peking between June 1st and 3rd. As the foreign diplomats became increasingly alarmed over Boxer violence and put more diplomatic pressure on the Chinese Government, the Imperial Court thought more seriously of using the Boxers against the foreigners. On June 7 and 8, Grand Councillors Chao Shu-ch'iao and Kang I arrived in Chochou, where the Boxers had gathered for battle with government forces, to order the withdrawal of General Nieh's troops from the area.²⁴

Seymour Expedition

On June 9, thoroughly alarmed about the Boxers, the British Minister in Peking, Sir Claude MacDonald, telegraphed British authorities at Tientsin to send immediate reinforcements to protect the legations. Under the command of Vice Adm. Edward H. Seymour, an international brigade of about 2,000 men left Tientsin by train on the morning of June 10. The next day the Seymour expedition found its route blocked by Boxer guerrillas around Langfang, halfway between Tientsin and Peking. The rail line had been badly damaged for miles ahead and it soon became impossible for the relief expedition to proceed.

As hope of relief dwindled among the foreigners in Peking, a chancellor of the Japanese legation went to the railroad station to find out what had happened to Seymour's expedition. Captured by a mob outside the main gate of the southern part of the city, he was brutally put to death.²⁵ Meanwhile, Seymour, unable to advance toward Peking, retreated to Tientsin. Marching his force back down the Peiho River, he seized Chinese junks to transport his wounded men and heavy provisions. The river distance to Tientsin was only about 30 miles, but the junks were often grounded in shallow water. In addition, there were attacks by Boxer bands and Chinese regular troops who, after June 18, joined the Boxers in harassing the retreating expeditionary force.

Chinese Government Incorporates Boxer Aims and Men

On June 13, after the Imperial Court had learned that an international force was marching toward Peking from Tientsin, Boxers were let into Peking. Then word reached the Imperial Court that the foreign fleets were demanding the surrender of the Chinese forts at Taku, a port on the Gulf of Chihli at the mouth of the Peiho, 25 miles southeast of Tientsin. Taku surrendered under bombardment on the 17th. On June 19, the Imperial Court decided to go to war with the foreign powers and to organize the Boxers immediately as an auxiliary force attached to the

Chinese Army.²⁶ On June 20, the German Minister to Peking was killed by a Chinese soldier, apparently at the order of his superior officers.²⁷ With these acts, the role of the Chinese Government was reversed: it switched from fighting the Boxers to adopting their aims, using them as an auxiliary force operating with the Chinese Army. Chinese counterinsurgency against the Boxers had thus ended, and the foreign phase was begun.

Return of Seymour

On June 22, after much fighting and great difficulty, Seymour's troops came upon the Hsiku arsenal six miles upriver from Tientsin, and took it by assault. Inside they found a great quantity of guns, ammunition, and rice. Despite this, they were too weak to fight their way to Tientsin unaided. A Chinese runner finally got through, and a relief column of 1,900 men, mostly Russians, led by a Lieutenant Colonel Shirinsky, arrived at the Hsiku arsenal on the 25th. Escorted by this force, the Seymour column set out at 3 a.m., taking a circuitous route to the foreign settlement at Tientsin, which they reached six hours later "without the firing of a shot."²⁸ Casualties suffered by the Seymour force during the 16 days of advance and retreat amounted to 62 killed and 228 wounded. Many of those who were not wounded were so exhausted that they had almost to be carried into the town.²⁹

Legations Under Siege

In Peking, the ministers of the foreign legations had been given 24 hours to leave, after the Imperial Government broke off diplomatic relations. When this demand was not met, the Boxers and the Chinese regulars opened fire on the legations on June 20. Thus began the siege that was to last for 56 days.

When the siege began, the legations had about 450 guards and officers, but of these 43 were sent to help defend the Northern Catholic Cathedral, in which more than 3,000 Chinese converts and refugees, in addition to nuns and missionaries, had taken refuge.³⁰ Besides the guards, there were some 470 foreigners and 2,000-odd Chinese refugees, coolies, and servants in the legations. From among the foreign civilians, 125 volunteers were armed with rifles, while more than 1,000 of the Chinese were employed on public works for general defense. The Chinese Christians also performed valuable intelligence and courier duties for the besieged foreigners. Since the guards were of different nationalities, it was necessary to choose one officer to serve as commander in chief. At first an Austrian officer took over the command, but he was soon replaced by Sir Claude MacDonald, the British Minister, who had served as a major in the British Army.³¹

Arms and Food

The legation guards were armed with rifles. They also had three machineguns and one Italian one-pounder quick-firing gun for which there were only 120 rounds of ammunition. When ammunition for this gun began to run short, pewter vessels, teapots, and candlesticks were

melted and cast into conical shot. Used cartridges were reloaded with this homemade shot, and revolver cartridge caps were used as primers. This ingenuity on the part of a British armorer was matched by that of an American gunner, who repaired an old 1860 cannon of British manufacture and fired it with Russian shells.³²

Food supply posed a major problem to the defenders. Fortunately, there were several large grain ships tied up in a waterway near the legations, and for several days carts were kept busy hauling these supplies into the British Legation. Even so, toward the latter part of the siege, horse and mule meat became staple diet, and what little mutton remained was reserved for invalids.³³

Fortifications

The building of defense works was urgently needed, and here F. D. Gamewell, a civil engineer of the American Methodist Mission, rendered valuable service. He headed the Fortification Committee, and it was under his direction that sandbags were filled, walls strengthened, and barricades erected. Chinese coolies and many foreigners contributed their labor, while the women, with needle and thread and a few sewing machines, manufactured sandbags. It was estimated that from 20,000 to 25,000 bags were made of all kinds of material, including window curtains, tablecloths, and blankets.

The Belgian Legation was abandoned in the early days of the siege to shorten the defense line, and after the Boxers burned the Austrian, Dutch, and Italian legations, the area to be defended was further reduced. Women and children were moved into the British Legation, the largest and strongest building, where it was planned to make a last stand.³⁴

The line of defense was roughly rectangular, 400 to 500 yards on a side. To the south was the old wall of the city, 60 feet high and 40 feet wide at the top. An old palace, the Su-Wang Fu, at the northeast corner of the square, was the weakest point on the defense perimeter. This section was held by the Japanese, under a Lieutenant Colonel Sheiba, with the assistance of about two dozen marines and as many volunteers. This force protected the east wall of the British Legation. Had the Su-Wang Fu fallen, the Chinese would have been able to attack the legation compound from a range of only 40 yards, and the foreigners' position would probably have become untenable.³⁵

Strategy and Tactics

As it was, the besieged faced attack by Imperial forces—consisting of the 10,000-man Central Army of Marshal Jung Lu and the 13,500-man Kamu Army of Gen. Tung Fu-hsiang, in addition to local security troops—and by the Boxers, who numbered in the tens of thousands. Although of necessity the legations depended upon an essentially defensive strategy,³⁶ they occasionally found offensive sorties necessary to repel an attack, to occupy a strategic position,

or to destroy nearby Chinese barricades. The occupation of the old Tartar wall, which formed the southern flank of the defense line, was accomplished by American and German marines in the early days of the siege. The capture on July 3 of a large Chinese barricade imperiling the south wall was done in the darkness of night under the leadership of a Captain Meyers of the U.S. Army and ensured the safety of the southern defense.³⁷

Civilians, including the Chinese refugees and converts, were mobilized into firefighting brigades to put out the fires set by the Boxers. When the defenders found that the Chinese attackers were making underground passages to lay mines beneath the legations, they dug trenches within the defense area and began to countermine in order to foil this tactic.³⁸

With a meager force of a few hundred guards, the legations repulsed repeated attacks by thousands of Chinese troops and more thousands of Boxers until relieved by the arrival of allied forces on August 14. The ability of the foreigners' military leadership, the courage and resourcefulness of the defenders, and the strength of the fortifications helped the legations to hold out for almost two months. The incompetence of the Chinese officers and attack forces may also have been a factor in the success of the defense.

Unofficial Chinese Efforts to Reduce Conflict

Perhaps the most important reason for the preservation of the legations from total destruction was the unwillingness of Jung Lu, the commander in chief of the Chinese forces in North China, to push the attacks home. Although ordered by the Imperial Court to attack the legations, Jung Lu was under pressure from the viceroys in South China to spare the foreigners. These provincial Chinese officials, who were aware of the military might of the foreign powers, continued to maintain diplomatic relations with the powers and regarded the Imperial Government's alliance with the Boxer movement as a dangerous political adventure. Sharing their doubts, Jung Lu used old guns in the attack on the foreign legations and agreed to a 20-day truce (July 16 to August 4), at a time when the legation defenses badly needed a respite.

With courage and astuteness, the southern viceroys, including Li Hung-chang at Canton, Liu K'un-i at Nanking, and Chang Chih-tung at Hankow, decided to disregard the Imperial decree of June 21 that declared war on the powers. With Governor Yuan Shih-k'ai of Shangtung Province joining in the southern action, the greater part of China was kept out of war. Viceroys Liu and Chang further negotiated with the foreign consuls at Shanghai and reached with them, in July 1900, an understanding to neutralize the Yangtze provinces, where the Chinese local authorities were to assume full responsibility to protect foreign life and property. Li and Chang also succeeded in persuading Chinese ministers abroad to stay on in the foreign capitals, thus keeping the door to peace open. Of more importance were the four viceroys' petitioning memorials to the throne urging that the foreign ministers in Peking be saved at

all costs. It was these strong presentations that inclined the Imperial Court toward conciliation and made it possible for Jung Lu to arrange the truce.³⁹

The Battle of Tientsin

During the first month of the siege of the legations in Peking, the foreign settlement of Tientsin was also under attack from the Chinese Army and Boxer forces in that area. The settlement was built on the right bank of the Peiho River, to the east of the city. The perimeter to be defended was about five miles long. Part of it was protected by a mud wall and part by the river, but about one-third was faced with Chinese houses so nearby that it was dangerously vulnerable. A further difficulty lay in the fact that the railroad station, vital for communication with Taku and the outside world, was practically isolated on the opposite bank of the river.⁴⁰

For the defense of the Tientsin foreign settlement, there was a mixed force of 2,400 men with nine field guns and some machineguns. The Chinese had over 15,000 regular troops and about 30,000 Boxers. In spite of these odds, the defense force held its positions from June 18 to 24, when a 2,000-man relief column from Taku arrived and lifted the first siege of Tientsin.⁴¹ This force, made up largely of Russian troops from Port Arthur, was commanded by Russian Gen. A. M. Stössel. Chinese guns from across the Peiho River soon resumed firing, however, and the second siege, which lasted until July 12, began. During this latter period, the foreign forces found that the most effective defense tactic was to make offensive incursions into the Chinese lines.⁴² They repeatedly stormed and captured outlying Chinese positions until at last the native city alone remained in Chinese hands.⁴³

By July 2, some 9,200 troops had been assembled in the foreign settlement of Tientsin and more were landing at Taku.⁴⁴ It was clear that any advance on Peking would require the capture of the Chinese sections of Tientsin, so that the rear lines of the allies would not be threatened. Accordingly, on July 13, an international force of 5,650 men moved out toward the native city. The Americans, English, and Japanese, taking the route west of the Peiho River, were to attack the south (or Taku) gate of the city, while Russian and French troops were to advance up the east bank of the river and then swing west across it, to take the northern part of the city.

In this attack, the American 9th Infantry, which followed the Japanese, was exposed to severe fire from a mud village. Their attempt to attack the huts was frustrated by an impassable swamp. Suffering under heavy rifle fire and shrapnel, the Americans took shelter in ditches, where they remained until they could withdraw under cover of darkness. American losses on that day were 17 killed and 71 wounded.⁴⁵

About 4 a. m. on July 14, the Japanese blew in the south gate. Other troops followed and by nightfall the city, with its surrounding suburbs, was in the hands of the international force.⁴⁶ The battle of Tientsin was a decisive victory for the foreigners. With a total of 775 casualties, the allied force had routed a much larger Chinese army consisting of some of the best troops in North China.

Allied Commanders Decide to March on Peking

With the clearing of Tientsin, the advance on Peking could get under way. On July 27, Gen. Alfred Gaselee, Commander of the British forces, proposed an immediate march on Peking. However, General Yamaguchi, Commander of the Japanese forces, wanted to wait until heavy reinforcements arrived. When Gen. Adna R. Chaffee, Commander of the United States forces, arrived at Tientsin on July 30, he too pressed for an immediate march to rescue the besieged foreigners in Peking. Though the Russian and French commanders (Gen. N. P. Lincivitch and Gen. H. N. Frey, respectively) were not in favor of an immediate move, it was finally decided that the allied forces should move out of Tientsin on the afternoon of August 4.⁴⁷

Battles En Route to Peking

The international force, some 20,000 strong,⁴⁸ first met the Chinese in battle at Peits'ang on the morning of August 5. The Japanese, who led the column on the right bank of the Peiho River, launched the attack. Although the Chinese were strongly and carefully entrenched, as usual their lack of good junior officers and want of tenacity among troops rendered their defense ineffective.⁴⁹ After two hours of intensive fighting, in which both sides used artillery, the Japanese charged the Chinese position on the right and broke through the Chinese line. The Japanese suffered heavy losses but forced the Chinese Army to retreat. It was a Japanese day in which Japanese troops bore the brunt of the fighting with dash and gallantry. The other allied forces were scarcely engaged and suffered practically no losses.⁵⁰

The Chinese retreated in good order, successfully fending off pursuing allied cavalry, and fell back to a well-chosen position at Yangts'un, 12 miles north of Peits'ang. Their defenses included two lines of trenches dug along the railroad embankment. This time the British and Americans led the allied column, with the Russians in close support. Chinese artillery and gunfire slowed down the advance of the international force, but the Chinese troops fled when the Americans charged their lines. On this occasion the Chinese retreat was not so orderly, though they managed to save part of their artillery. Chinese losses were heavy, amounting to more than 1,000 men, compared with only some 170 casualties on the part of the allies.⁵¹

The international forces resumed their advance on August 8, reaching Ts'aits'un without more fighting. They next occupied Losiwu on the 9th, after some light resistance. Here the Chinese had assembled tens of thousands of troops, including four new divisions under Li Ping-heng, who had just arrived from Peking. Lacking previous combat experience, these newly recruited troops quickly broke and ran when confronted with the powerful expeditionary assault force. In fact, many of the Chinese fled as soon as they learned of the arrival of the allied force.⁵² The Chinese had attempted to drain the river and flood the country through which the allies were marching, but the foreigners' swift advance did not allow time to complete the operation.⁵³ When the international forces reached T'ungchou on August 12, the Chinese troops had already left the town.

The Drive on Peking

At an allied council of war held on the 12th, the Russian commander maintained that his troops needed rest and would therefore not be able to move the following day. It was therefore agreed that the international forces would devote the 13th to reconnaissance, that they would concentrate troops at a line about five miles from Peking on the 14th, and that they would attack on the 15th.⁵⁴

During the night of the 13th, however, the Russian commander began secretly deploying his troops for a surprise attack on Peking. The Japanese general, on learning of the Russian move, ordered his men to move out at once. The Americans and the British followed, all racing for the honor of being first to enter Peking.⁵⁵ Although the Russians were the first through the Tungpien Gate, they were stalled there until the Americans arrived. U.S. forces then scaled the wall and planted the U.S. flag, which became the first foreign colors unfurled at Peking. But the honor of first reaching the legations fell to the British.

While the Chinese were directing their attention to the Japanese, Russians, and Americans at the Tungpien Gate, the British marched unopposed into the city through the Shakuo (or Shahuo) Gate, about a mile to the south. They then entered the legation quarter by way of the Water Gate in the old Tartar wall, at 3 p.m. on August 14.⁵⁶

Characteristics of the Allied Action

One of the peculiar features of the 10-day march to Peking was the lack of an overall commander for the international forces. Although a conference of the several commanders was held whenever necessary to decide on the movement of the expedition as a whole, there was no central planning or control. Only a common desire to defeat the Chinese and the keen rivalry among the various national units made up for the confusion resulting from the deficiencies of a multiple command structure.⁵⁷

Because the Boxers had dispersed after their defeat at Tientsin, the battles from Peking to T'ungchou were fought between the Chinese Army and the allied forces. Nevertheless the normal rules of international law governing conventional warfare were not generally applied. Except for some few cases handled by the Americans and the British, no quarter was either asked or given on either side. Entire villages were often burned after allied forces had been fired upon by them, or even on the merest suspicion of their harboring Boxers. Many innocent Chinese were killed and numerous atrocities were committed by the international expeditionary force, although the record of the Americans in China was relatively good in this respect.⁵⁸

Terror in Peking

Following the entrance of foreign troops into Peking on August 14, confusion and lawlessness reigned in the capital city. The Empress and her entourage had fled in disguise a few hours

before the city fell into allied hands. For three days the city was abandoned to looting, rape, and other outrages. For the Russians and French, it was a free-for-all.⁵⁹ The British required that property taken by their troops be put up for auction.⁶⁰ Even Japanese troops, reputed to be well disciplined, were not exempt from guilt.⁶¹ The Americans were specifically forbidden to engage in looting, but this order was not always obeyed. General Chaffee wrote that Peking had been sacked "from corner to corner in the most disgraceful manner imaginable. . . . I had no idea that civilized armies would resort to such proceedings. It is a race for spoil. I have kept my command fairly clean, thank God, but with all my efforts it is not spotless."⁶²

Mopping-up Operations and Reprisals

At a conference held on August 18, the foreign diplomats and the commanding generals divided the city into sections, each of which was given into the care of a national contingent for purposes of order and police supervision.⁶³ The Japanese and Americans were the first to bring order out of chaos, and the Chinese merchants and inhabitants soon returned to these sections. The Russian and French sectors, however, remained deserted since a reign of terror continued there. The Germans, appearing late on the scene, were apparently obsessed with the idea of revenge and adopted extremely harsh measures that long kept Chinese away from this zone of occupation.⁶⁴ The fight against the Boxers continued even after the legations in Peking had been saved and the situation was militarily in hand. The Boxers in Peking had dispersed when the allies entered and the few who were discovered in the city and the vicinity were expeditiously executed. In the passion to kill Boxers, many innocent Chinese were also sacrificed.⁶⁵ Although Chinese authorities now assumed the initiative in dispersing the Boxers in the metropolitan Peking area, the allies undertook a number of punitive expeditions. These were organized by Count Alfred Waldersee, the German general who arrived in Peking in October to command all international forces in North China. He was apparently anxious to avenge the murder of the German minister and to impress the Chinese people with the might of German arms.⁶⁶ These expeditions met with very little resistance and some found no Boxers at all, but villagers were nonetheless killed and villages destroyed. These harsh German measures were based on the idea that the Chinese "barbarians" could learn only through punishment.⁶⁷

An expedition against Paotingfu, about 80 miles south of Peking, was organized by Waldersee in October 1900. A force of 4,000 men started from Peking, while a cooperating column of 7,000 moved out from Tientsin. The Americans declined to participate, on the ground that the expedition had a "tendency to promote rather than allay hostilities and unquiet in surrounding country."⁶⁸ In order to avoid conflict, the Chinese authorities ordered the withdrawal of Chinese troops from Paotingfu. Nevertheless, high provincial officials were arrested by the allied force, and German and French troops took to pillaging as soon as they entered the city.⁶⁹

As noted by an American officer, "the punitive expeditions had degenerated into the taking of a few lives and the destruction of property without any compensating good whatever."⁷⁰

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

On August 19, 1900, while in flight from Peking, the Imperial Court ordered Li Hung-chang, China's veteran statesman, to negotiate peace with the foreign powers.⁷¹ Later, Prince Ch'ing was named as negotiator with Li. Although none of the powers involved had officially declared war on China and all had steadfastly maintained that their military actions were directed only against the Boxer rebels, they felt that a formal settlement was called for. Since their interests varied, it took some time for them to agree on a joint note of 11 points to be presented to the Chinese plenipotentiaries on December 24. Further modifications, additions, and ironing out of details ensued. Finally, on September 7, 1901, the 12 article Boxer Peace Protocol was signed.

Under this treaty, high officials, including Manchu princes of the blood who were guilty of supporting the Boxers, were given death sentences or otherwise severely punished. China was to pay the allied powers a sum of 450 million taels (over \$300 million) as indemnity, over a period of 39 years.* Other provisions stipulated that the quarter occupied by the legations in Peking was to be placed under exclusive foreign control; that strategic points along the Peking-Tientsin-Shanhaikwan railway were to be occupied by the powers so as to guarantee open communications between the capital and the sea; and that edicts were to be published throughout the country prohibiting, under the pain of death, membership in any anti-foreign society.⁷²

In September 1901, after the signing of the Peace Protocol, all foreign troops except the legation guards were evacuated from Peking; and in January 1902, the Imperial Court returned to Peking from its refuge in Shensi Province. Russia, however, used disorders that spread into Manchuria as an excuse to maintain troops there and sought to extend her control over this area. Eventually, this brought her into conflict with the other great powers, particularly Japan, and Russian forces were finally driven out of Manchuria and Port Arthur by the Japanese in 1905. As far as China was concerned, this merely substituted Japanese for Russian presence in Manchuria, but it exemplified the rivalry among the powers which saved China from being partitioned among them in the chaotic aftermath of the Boxer Rebellion.

A Tactical Review

The military aspects of this bizarre case of limited warfare present a number of interesting facets. One of these is the question of the military effectiveness and political wisdom of the Seymour expedition. Seymour's return to Tientsin with heavy losses has been criticized by

*In 1908, the United States remitted a portion of her share which was then used to finance scholarships for Chinese students to study in the United States.

some military experts who maintained that his force could have gone forward from Langfang more easily than it returned.⁷³ It is doubtful, however, that Seymour could have reached Peking, in view of the fact that the Chinese Army, with all its quickfiring guns, had received an order to stop him. Had the expedition been blocked somewhere near Peking, it might have been completely wiped out, for no relief force, such as the one sent from Tientsin, could have reached it.

But if the decision to return to Tientsin was militarily justifiable, there remains the question of whether the expedition should have been launched at all. It was only after protesting in vain against the Seymour expedition that the Chinese Government decided to stop the foreigners by force, and it was only then that the Boxers, hitherto considered as rebels, were organized into the Chinese Army. Thus, the Seymour expedition not only failed to relieve the Peking legations, but it appears to have aggravated the political situation.

Strategic Results of the Boxer Rebellion

The violence of the Boxer uprising served dramatic notice on the outside world that China did not wish to be regarded as fair game for colonial treatment. But internally, even the Empress Dowager realized the dimensions of the disaster into which her rash policies had led China, and she drastically modified her anti-foreign attitude. Western-style schools were instituted and the old system of education overhauled. Economic relations with the foreign powers were virtually unrestricted. Yet this tardy recognition of the modern world was both too late and too little to save the Manchu regime, whose folly and ineptitude had been thoroughly exposed by the Boxer catastrophe.

More and more Chinese came to the conclusion that it was hopeless to expect the Imperial Government to undertake the extensive reforms needed to strengthen the country and improve the lot of the people. In this sense, the Boxer Rebellion paved the way for the revolutionary movement of Sun Yat-sen, which began to gather force after 1901 and which in 1911 succeeded in overthrowing the Manchu monarchy that had ruled China for almost three centuries.

Indeed, one may question the decision of the original counterinsurgent, the Chinese Imperial Government, to take over the Boxer insurgents for its own military use against the foreign powers. One must grant that the government was thereby able to check and control the Boxer movement's antigovernment political implications. The government also added to its regular forces—although the military effectiveness of the Boxers was low since they had no stomach for intensive fighting in a conventional setting and, once organized into the ranks of the regular forces, lost the advantages of clandestine activity and irregular tactics. However, by this policy of co-opting the Boxers, the Chinese Government exposed its own inherent weakness and political vacuity. When the foreign ministers first sent for reinforcements to protect the legations, they probably had in mind a limited, defensive operation against the Boxers. Paradoxically, the incorporation of the xenophobic insurgents into the regular forces of China made it possible,

for the first time, for the foreign expeditionary force to come to grips with and destroy the previously elusive bands.

NOTES

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²²Chih Tung tien-ts'un, Introduction/8.

²³*Ibid.*, 4/3-4.

- ²⁴Ch'ing Te-tsung shih-lu, 463/6b.
- ²⁵British Parliamentary Papers, China No. 4 (1900), p. 20.
- ²⁶Ch'ing Te-tsung shih-lu, 464/11a.
- ²⁷British Parliamentary Papers, China No. 4 (1900), p. 23.
- ²⁸William H. Carter, The Life of Lieutenant General Chaffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1917), pp. 63-64.
- ²⁹China No. 3 (1900), pp. 29-34, 45, 84; Edward H. Seymour, My Naval Career (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1911), pp. 345, 352-354; C. C. Dix, The World's Navies in the Boxer Rebellion (London: Digby, Long and Co., 1905), p. 115; Gordon Casserly, The Land of the Boxers (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1903), p. 32; Brown, From Tientsin, p. 34.
- ³⁰British Parliamentary Papers, China No. 3 (1901), p. 21; Casserly, Land, p. 96.
- ³¹Coltman, Beleaguered, pp. 80, 86; Dix, World's Navies, pp. 250, 253.
- ³²British Parliamentary Papers, China No. 3 (1901), pp. 16-17; Coltman, Beleaguered, pp. 100-101.
- ³³Brown, From Tientsin, p. 54; Coltman, Beleaguered, p. 86.
- ³⁴Wilson, China, p. 370; Dix, World's Navies, p. 250.
- ³⁵Lynch, War, p. 86.
- ³⁶See I-ho T'uan tzv-jiao ts'ung-K'an, III, 280; Wilson, China, p. 372.
- ³⁷Coltman, Beleaguered, pp. 97-98; Sarah Conger, Letters from China (Chicago: A. C. McClurg, 1909), p. 11.
- ³⁸China No. 3 (1901), pp. 23-24.
- ³⁹Tan, The Boxer Catastrophe, pp. 76ff, 112ff.
- ⁴⁰Dix, World's Navies, p. 49.
- ⁴¹A. S. Daggett, America in the China Relief Expedition (Kansas City: 1903), pp. 19-20.
- ⁴²W. S. Chalmers, The Life and Letters of David, Earl Beatty (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1951), p. 49.
- ⁴³The eastern or Peiyang arsenal was taken on June 27 and the Haikuangtzu arsenal on July 9. China No. 3 (1900), p. 87.
- ⁴⁴Ibid., p. 99.
- ⁴⁵Daggett, America, pp. 29-31, 36.
- ⁴⁶Carter, Life, p. 69; Dix, World's Navies, pp. 173-174; A. A. S. Barnes, On Active Service with the Chinese Regiment (London: Grant Richards, 1902), p. 78.
- ⁴⁷Brown, From Tientsin, pp. 56-58; Carter, Life, pp. 182-184, 233; Daggett, America, p. 58.
- ⁴⁸The figures given by Brown, From Tientsin, p. 18, are: 10,000 Japanese, 4,000 Russians, 3,000 British, 2,000 Americans, 800 French, and 300 Germans and Italians. (The Germans and Italians, not being prepared for the advance, returned to Tientsin after the battle of Peits'ang.) Other writers estimate the allied strength at 14,000 to 17,000 men. See Carter, Life, p. 232; Dix, World's Navies, p. 211.
- ⁴⁹The main Chinese force fighting at Peits'ang was Gen. Sung Ch'ing's army.
- ⁵⁰Daggett, America, p. 58; Brown, From Tientsin, p. 69.
- ⁵¹Dix, World's Navies, pp. 212, 218-219; Brown, From Tientsin, p. 68.

- ⁵²Li Peng-heng, Li Chung-Chieh Kung tsou-i, 16/29.
- ⁵³Barnes, On Active Service, p. 122.
- ⁵⁴Carter, Life, p. 190.
- ⁵⁵Brown, From Tientsin, p. 103.
- ⁵⁶China No. 3 (1901), p. 29; Carter, Life, p. 203.
- ⁵⁷Norman Stewart, My Service Days (London: John Ouseley, 1908), pp. 210, 220; Daggett, America, p. 55; Carter, Life, p. 70.
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- ⁶⁷Daggett, America, p. 216.
- ⁶⁸Quoted in Carter, Life, p. 216.
- ⁶⁹Stewart, My Service Days, p. 289.
- ⁷⁰Carter, Life, p. 230.
- ⁷¹Ch'ing Te-tsung shih-lu, 467/10b.
- ⁷²British Parliamentary Papers, China No. 1 (1902), pp. 237ff.
- ⁷³Wilson, China, p. 36.

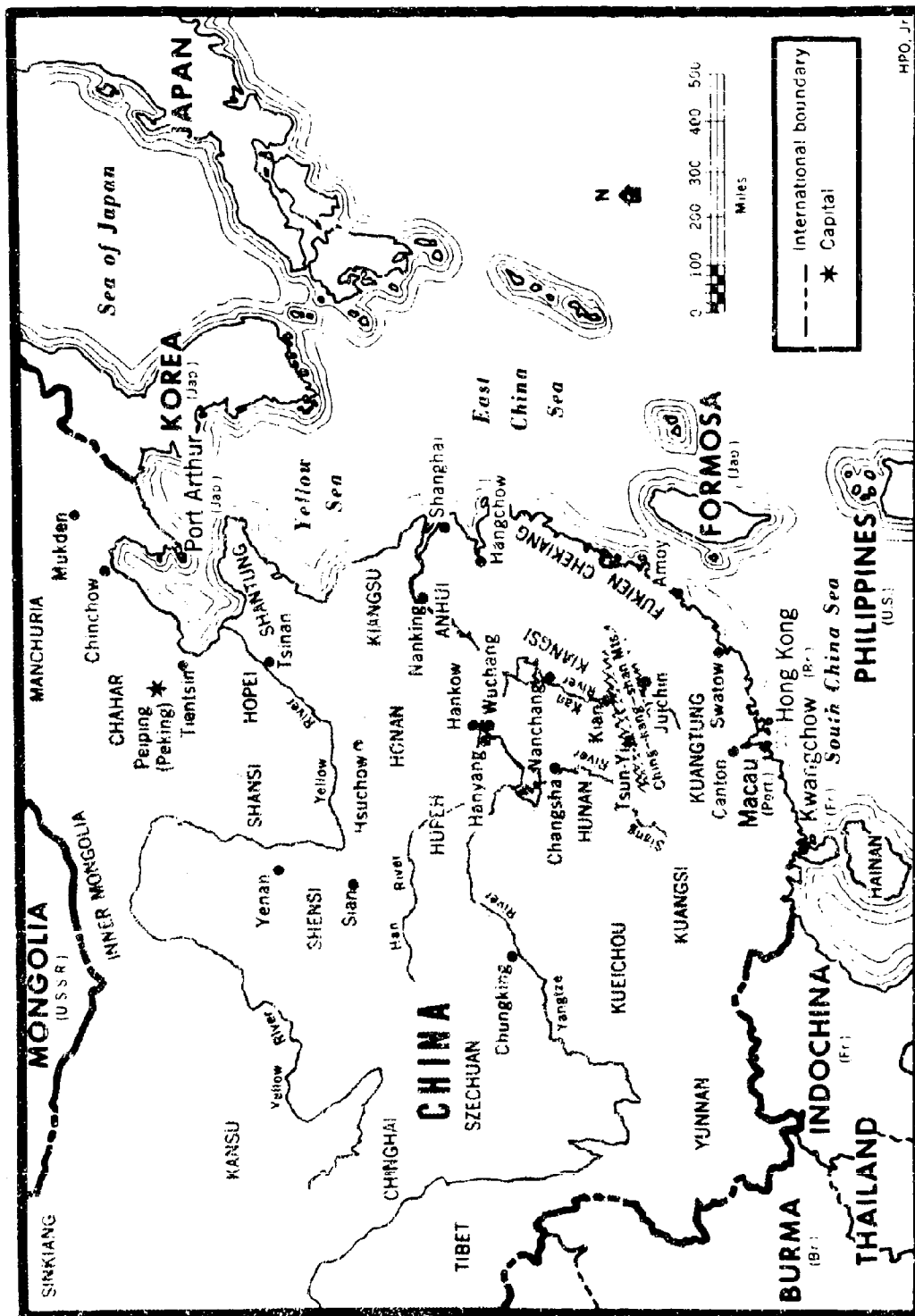
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Chapter Two

CHINA
1927-1937

by Michael Lindsay



CHINA (1927-37)

HPO, Jr.

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Although Chiang Kai-shek and his Kuomintang government were ultimately defeated and driven from the mainland in 1949 by the Chinese Communists, Kuomintang operations of 1927-37 provide a striking example of counterinsurgency strategy and tactics.

BACKGROUND

The protracted struggle between the Chinese Kuomintang and the Chinese Communists falls into four very distinct periods. During the first period, from 1923 to 1927, the two parties were in alliance against their common enemies, the warlord regimes, and their rivalry was within a joint organization. This alliance broke down in 1926-27 and, by the end of 1927, the Communist had suffered almost complete defeat.

The second period, from late 1927 to 1937, is the main topic of this study. At this time, a peasant-based Communist insurgency developed, reaching a high point in the period 1932-33. By late 1934, however, the Communists had been forced to evacuate their main base areas in South and Central China. Although by 1936 they had managed, through the famous "Long March," to concentrate their forces in northwest China, their losses had been very heavy and the new base area was much smaller and poorer than those they had been forced to abandon. If the Kuomintang had been able to continue the counterinsurgency strategies that had proved successful in South and Central China, it is likely that Communist insurgency would have been reduced to small and scattered guerrilla operations and perhaps eliminated. In reality, the Communists were saved by increasing Japanese pressure on China, which led to an unofficial Kuomintang-Communist truce in December 1936 and to a new official alliance between the two parties in September 1937, after the Japanese invasion of China had begun.

From 1937 to 1945, the internal Chinese struggle was subordinate to the common effort against the Japanese.* When this third period was terminated by war's end in August 1945, the Communists had managed to expand their forces to a regular army of nearly one million, and they

*See Chapter 6, "China (1937-1945)."

controlled about one hundred million persons in the countryside. In the fourth and final period, from 1945 to 1949, fighting between Kuomintang and Communist forces recommenced soon after the Japanese surrender. American mediation produced a lull in hostilities in 1946, though the truce agreements were never fully effective. By the beginning of 1947, however, a full-scale civil war was in progress, with military operations increasingly in the category of regular warfare. This period ended in 1949 with Communist victory on the mainland.

Area of Operations

The total area of China (including Tibet) is larger than that of the continental United States, 3.79 million as against 2.98 million square miles. The range from north to south is also greater: northern Manchuria is in the same latitude as Labrador; Hainan, as Cuba. However, a large proportion of China's total area is mountain or desert, and over half the total area—the west and northwest—supports only 3 percent of the population. In these areas the population is largely non-Chinese, including Tibetans, Mongols, and Central Asian groups.

The main centers of Communist insurgency in the period from 1927 to 1935 were in an area south of the Yangtze River, extending some 600 miles from east to west and 300 miles north to south. This area included the provinces of Kiangsi* (63,000 square miles, 20 million population) and Hunan (79,000 square miles, 30 million population), some western areas of Fukien (46,000 square miles, 10 million population), parts of Hupeh and Anhui south of the Yangtze (72,000 square miles, 27 million population, and 40,000 square miles, 22 million population respectively); and it extended at times into northern Kuangtung (85,000 square miles, 32 million population) and southeastern Szechuan (117,000 square miles, 48 million population). North of the Yangtze River, there were smaller areas on the border of Hupeh, Honan, and Anhui (64,000 square miles, 30 million population), in Szechuan and on the borders of Shensi (73,000 square miles, 12 million population) and Kansu (150,000 square miles, 6 million population).¹

To make a comparison with the United States, the main theater of operations covered an area equal to the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee. In relation to this area, the Shensi-Kansu base to which the Communist forces retreated in the Long March of 1936 would be in South Dakota.

Most of this large area lies between 25 and 30 degrees north latitude, the same as Florida. Annual rainfall is between 40 and 60 inches, with the heaviest rains in a summer rainy season. The summer climate is hot and humid and winter temperatures rarely fall below freezing at low altitudes, though snow and freezing temperatures occur in the mountains. The Communist area on the Shensi-Kansu border was in a different climatic zone: the rainfall is much lower and almost entirely concentrated in a summer rainy season, while winter temperatures fall below 6° Fahrenheit. The main crop is not rice but millet or wheat.

* The spelling of place names in this chapter conforms generally to commonly accepted postal usage, except for certain little-known places which are given in the Wade-Giles system.

North of the Yangtze, western Hupeh and western Honan are mountainous; farther east, the country is mostly plains except for some 5,000-foot mountains on the Hupeh-Honan-Anhui border. Much of China south of the Yangtze River is mountainous, with altitudes reaching between 5,000 and 6,000 feet and with some peaks just over 7,000 feet in southern Hunan. There is a fairly wide coastal belt of relatively level country in Kuangtung; also, two strips of rather level country about 100 miles wide run from 150 to 200 miles southward from the Yangtze.

In these strips of level country are the two provincial capitals of Changsha and Nanchang. Changsha, capital of Hunan, is on the Hsiang River, which flows into the Yangtze through the Tungting Lake. Nearly 200 miles to the east, Nanchang, capital of Kiangsi, is on the Kan River, which flows into the Yangtze through the Poyang Lake. Hankow, the capital of Hupeh, is on the north bank of the Yangtze where it is joined by the Han River from the northwest about 175 miles northeast of Changsha and 160 miles northwest of Nanchang. The group of three cities—Hankow on the Yangtze, Hanyang, between the Han and Yangtze Rivers, and Wuchang on the south bank of the Yangtze—is usually referred to as Wuhan.

The Communist base areas were all in mountainous regions where, at this period, communications were extremely primitive. Some motor roads were built in the course of the anti-Communist campaigns, but there were very large areas where the only means of transport were pack animals or porters. Although there was some coal and iron ore mining in Hunan and some industry in the major cities, most of the area was agricultural, with rice as the main food crop. Because of population pressure, cultivation often extended even into the wilder mountain areas; however, in some regions a fair amount of forest remained on the hills.

Chinese Social and Economic System

China of the 1920's was a country in which a long-established social order had broken down, leaving political chaos. It is worth saying a little about this traditional order because it is often described as feudal, a term which in this connection is highly misleading. Before the 20th century, China was a country in which power and wealth depended on official status far more than on property ownership.² The ruling group, often described as the "gentry," consisted of the holders of degrees from the Imperial civil service examination system. In the 19th century, this group had formed about 2 percent of the population and received about 25 percent of the national income. Official positions in the Imperial Government were held by relatively few—only some tens of thousands—and the rewards of office were extremely high. The regular government extended down to the hsien (roughly equivalent to a county), of which there were about 2,000 in China proper, excluding the largely non-Chinese west and northwest. The official in charge of a fairly prosperous hsien could expect an income of about US \$40,000 a year, and far larger fortunes could be made at the provincial and central government levels. By contrast, a laborer would earn only US \$10-15 a year. Below the hsien level, government was run by the

local gentry. Property without the protection of gentry status gave very little power and was not very secure, though a rich merchant or landowner might be able to acquire a degree without examination through some combination of bribery and public service.

Under this system, well-to-do families had an advantage in that they could give their children the long education needed for success in the examinations, but it was still possible for an intelligent poor boy to reach a high position if his relatives joined together to invest in his education.

A major weakness of the system was its emphasis on conformity. The only road to advancement was through the single bureaucratic hierarchy and the examinations tested only literary skill and knowledge of the Confucian classics. After China's defeat in the Opium War in 1842, some of the more able high officials recognized the need to introduce Western technology, but this effort came to naught. Any effective modernization would have threatened the position of the ruling group whose status and prestige were entirely bound up with Chinese classical learning. Furthermore, it was very difficult for any official to overcome conservative opposition, because the whole system was so organized as to prevent independent action or the buildup of any local power that might threaten the central Imperial authority. The power of conservatism is illustrated by the fact that, some years after the Japanese Government had completed its first railroad in Japan, the Chinese Government bought the first railroad in China, the Shanghai-Woosung line built by a British firm, only to demolish it.

China—The "Hypo-colony"

As a result, China was unable to resist increasing foreign encroachment. By the 20th century, China was described as a "hypo-colony," a country in which many foreign powers had the privileges of colonialism. Foreigners enjoyed extraterritorial rights and could be tried only by their own consular courts. The "treaty ports," which had become the main commercial and industrial centers, were enclaves under foreign administration, protected by foreign troops and gunboats. Foreigners managed the Chinese Post Office and the Maritime Customs Service, whose rates of duty were limited by treaty to 5 percent ad valorem.

The final blow to the prestige of the traditional system came in 1895, when China was decisively defeated by Japan, a far smaller Asian country. A start was then made in organizing a Western-style army. There was a final outburst of blind antforeignism in 1900,* when the Chinese Government declared war on all the major foreign powers—though local officials in Central and South China promptly made agreements to keep their areas neutral. The first decade of the 20th century saw a belated attempt at reform. The traditional civil service examinations were abolished in 1905 and plans were started for constitutional government.

*See Chapter 1, "China (1898-1901)."

Sun Yat-sen and the Thwarted Revolution of 1911

By this time, however, a revolutionary republican movement led by Sun Yat-sen was gaining strength. In 1911, an army revolt at Wuhan led to the downfall of the Manchu dynasty and the establishment of a republic. But the revolution succeeded only by winning the support of Yuan Shih-k'ai, the Imperial official who had organized the new-style army which was the most powerful military force in China. Yuan Shih-k'ai's price was the presidency of the Republic. Once installed, he proceeded to make himself independent of the parliament in which Sun Yat-sen's party, the Kuomintang, had a majority. Yuan suppressed a military uprising against him, and planned to become a new emperor with the dynastic title "glorious constitution."

Yuan Shih-k'ai had consolidated his power by appointing his followers as concurrent military and civil provincial governors. His death in 1916 left all effective power in the hands of these local military commanders, the warlords, who engaged in continual civil wars. By the 1920's, most educated Chinese opinion had rejected the traditional Chinese system, was disillusioned by the failure of the attempts to establish parliamentary democracy after 1911, and was looking for some new social order.

Formation of the Chinese Communist Party

The Soviet Union, established in Russia after the Communist revolution of 1917, made a powerful appeal by promising to renounce all Russian imperialist privileges in China,* and Chinese intellectuals became interested in communism as a possible system for China. It is important for an understanding of Chinese communism to realize that its leaders were influenced by the Russian Lenin rather than by the German Karl Marx.

The Chinese Communist Party (known as Kun-chang-tang or KCT) was organized with the assistance of the U. S. S. R.'s Comintern advisers, dating its official foundation from a congress held in July 1921. It began as a very small group, intellectuals comprising most of its membership. Its leader until August 1927 was Ch'en Tu-hsiu, a well-known scholar who had been dean of the College of Arts and Letters at Peking University. An important source of recruitment for the party was among Chinese students in Europe. Among the Communist leaders, Chou En-lai (now Prime Minister), Ch'en Yi (now Minister of Foreign Affairs), and Nieh Jung chen (now Chairman of the Scientific and Technological Commission) became Communists while students in France; and Chu Te (now Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress) joined while a student in Germany.

Mao Tse-tung

Another of the party's early members was Mao Tse-tung, though he did not play a particularly prominent role in the party leadership until after 1927, and became its recognized leader

*It later backed out of some of these promises over the Chinese Eastern Railway in Manchuria.

only in 1935. Mao's family background would now be categorized as "rich peasant", his father had a fair amount of land and also ran a rice trading business. Born in 1893, Mao started with some traditional classical schooling and then became interested in modern learning and revolutionary politics. He joined the army for a short period during the 1911 revolution and was later graduated from the Hunan Provincial Normal College. Although he was in Peking for a short time as an assistant in the Peking University Library, Mao's main activities until 1923 were in his home province of Hunan.

Communist Influence in the Kuomintang

Meanwhile, the Communists reached out to extend their political influence within the Kuomintang Party. Sun Yat-sen, the leader of the forces behind the 1911 revolution, had been squeezed out by Yuan Shih-k'ai but had managed in 1917 to set up a rival Chinese government in Canton in alliance with local warlords. His sympathies were with Western democracy rather than communism, but the Western powers rejected his appeals for assistance. At a low point in his fortunes, when he had lost power even at Canton, Sun accepted a Communist alliance in January 1923, arranged by the Comintern agent A. A. Joffe. Individual Communist Party members were then allowed to join Sun's Kuomintang and the Soviet Union agreed to supply arms and political and military advisers. While the Soviet leaders also tried to extend their influence in China through alliances with some of the northern warlords, they were more farsighted than the Western powers in realizing that Sun Yat-sen's Kuomintang was the largest political organization in China and potentially more powerful than the warlord regimes, despite the immediate weakness of Sun's position.

The Sun-Joffe agreement brought about a number of changes in the Kuomintang. After the agreement, Sun Yat-sen sent his chief military adviser, Chiang Kai-shek, to the Soviet Union, where he remained for several months, returning to China in December 1923. Chiang Kai-shek, born in 1887 into a middle-class family in Chekiang Province, had gone to the Paoting Officers' School, which had formed part of the program for modernizing the Chinese Army, and had also been among those students chosen for further officer training in Japan. He had in fact probably joined Sun Yat-sen's organization while in Japan in 1907. In the reorganized Kuomintang regime at Canton, Chiang became Commandant of the Whampoa Officers School, with Gen. Vassily Blücher (alias General Galen) as the Soviet adviser and Chou En-lai as a political commissar. The mission of this school was to produce a new model of revolutionary officer, indoctrinated in political values and able to impart these new ideas to the fighting forces. When the test came, troops with some idea of what they were fighting for proved far more effective than the purely mercenary forces of the warlords.

Other changes in the Kuomintang included a new constitution based on the Leninist model. This was prepared by the chief Soviet adviser, Michael Borodin (a Russian Communist of Jewish

origin originally named Michael Gerselbourg. A mass organization among workers and peasants was also developed. In all this, the Communists played a very active role and party membership expanded from a few hundred in 1922 to about 60,000 by 1926. But Chinese Communist policy was closely controlled from Moscow, and Comintern representatives often overruled the judgment of the Chinese Communist leaders.

Communist Failure to Dominate the Kuomintang

After the death of Sun Yat-sen in 1925, increasing rivalry developed between the Communist and the nationalist wings of the alliance. Each side needed the other as an ally against its common enemies, the warlord regimes; but each was looking forward to eliminating the other when these common enemies had been defeated. Within the Kuomintang Party organization, Wang Ching-wei, politically leftwing, and Hu Han-min, politically rightwing, had equally good claims to be Sun Yat-sen's successor. But Chiang Kai-shek's control of military power was decisive. Largely because Communist policy was directed by remote control from Moscow, Chiang was able to out-manuever the Communists and to emerge as the dominant Kuomintang leader.

During this period, the Kuomintang was establishing its military dominance over the warlords in the south; and by mid-1926 it launched the Northern Expedition against those of the north. By 1927, the Kuomintang had conquered Central China; and in June 1928, it had captured Peking, thus gaining control of all North China south of the Great Wall.

The break between the Nationalists and the Communists in the Kuomintang meanwhile came after Central China had been conquered in the Northern Expedition. In April 1927, Chiang Kai-shek crushed the Communist organization in Shanghai and set up at Nanking a government that rivaled the Kuomintang's Central Executive Committee controlled by the left wing at Hankow. In July 1927, this leftwing Kuomintang regime under Wang Ching-wei broke with the Communists and expelled the Soviet advisers. By the fall of 1927, the Nanking capital of Chiang Kai-shek was the center of Kuomintang authority. Thus at the end of this first period, the Communists had been decisively defeated in their attempts to take over the Kuomintang organization by boring from within.

INSURGENCY

Communist strategy had envisaged a peasant-based revolution in China, but this policy had been in abeyance while the Communists hoped to infiltrate and take over the Kuomintang. Now in the summer of 1927, the Chinese Communists began open armed revolt against the Kuomintang.

Insurgency was not unknown to the Chinese. Large-scale peasant rebellions had occurred at intervals over more than two thousand years of Chinese history, usually in periods of dynastic

decline when the power of the central government to maintain order had weakened and when corruption and inefficiency had increased. In the period between 1850 and 1870, the Taiping rebels, starting in South China, had conquered the lower Yangtze valley and, at one time, nearly captured Peking. Later the Nien rebels controlled large areas of the North China countryside, and Muslim rebels controlled large areas in northwest China and parts of Yunnan in the southwest. All these rebellions had been suppressed by the 1870's, but as already noted, the Imperial Government of China was overthrown in 1911 and a republic proclaimed.

Social and Economic Deterioration Under the Republic

By the 1920's, conditions were again ripe for rebellion over large parts of China. There had almost certainly been a worsening of conditions in the countryside. Although the traditional ruling class had exploited the people, the degree-holding gentry had accepted some responsibility for public service and the Imperial system had provided some sanction against local officials who pushed exploitation too far. Under the Republic, government became almost entirely exploitative. Even a public-spirited warlord had to maintain his army, and most warlords were interested only in their own fortunes. Very few of the local warlords were sufficiently secure to consider the long-term advantage to be gained by developing the resources of the area they controlled through reasonably efficient government. Banditry was widespread and local bandit leaders were often incorporated into warlord armies. And, under frequently changing warlord regimes, power at the village level came also to depend on military force. Rich families could hire armed retainers and become petty tyrants against whose extortions the common people in the villages had no redress.

Population pressure contributed to worsening conditions. Though some industrial development had started, it was on far too small a scale to absorb the growing surplus of underemployed peasants. Agrarian conditions seem to have been worse south of the Yangtze valley: holdings there were smaller and the ratio of tenants to landowning peasants greater.

Conditions varied greatly from village to village. In some villages a great deal of the land belonged to the local clan organization, which leased it to clan members on such favorable terms that tenants of clan land might be better off than landowning farmers. In other villages the gap between tenant and landlord was comparatively small. However, although the picture given by Communist publicity of universal class warfare in the countryside was exaggerated and oversimplified, there were enough landlords who fitted the Communist stereotype of the brutal and oppressive local tyrant to create a potentially revolutionary situation.

Marxism Adapted to Agrarian China

It is quite widely believed that Mao Tse-tung was both original and unorthodox in basing a Communist revolution on peasant insurgency, and his "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan," published in the spring of 1927, has been termed "a revolutionary classic."

In fact, however, as early as 1923, Comintern directives³ to the Chinese Communist Party had stressed the importance of the peasants to the Chinese revolution and called for a radical agrarian program including confiscation of landlords' holdings without compensation. A directive of November 1926 explicitly termed the peasantry the main force behind the Chinese revolution.* Even before the alliance with the Kuomintang in 1923, some Chinese Communists had started to organize the peasants and the development of Communist-led peasant organization proceeded actively during the period of alliance.

The real problem for the Chinese Communists was one of tactics rather than strategy: when should they abandon the alliance with the Kuomintang? So long as official policy, laid down by the Comintern, called for maintaining the alliance, the Chinese Communists had to restrain their peasant organization from class warfare in the countryside and the confiscation and redistribution of land. Right up to the autumn of 1927, Comintern policy continued to call for an alliance with leftwing Kuomintang groups who could be used by the Communists. The Russians appear to have underestimated the intelligence of Kuomintang leaders. As soon as it became clear that the Communists were trying to build up their strength in the joint organization to work only for a Communist revolution rather than for the nationalist and reformist objectives accepted in the Sun-Joffe agreement, the alliance was bound to be broken from the Kuomintang side.

Communist Failures of 1927-28

Communist insurgency therefore started in 1927, but its initial efforts were marked by a series of failures. The first was at Nanchang. On August 1, army units which had come under Communist control revolted—an event now celebrated by the Chinese Communists as the beginning of the Red Army. The main leaders were Chou En-lai and Li Li-san on the party side and Yeh T'ing and Ho Lung on the military side, though Ho Lung joined the Communist Party only in the course of the revolt. They were joined by Chu Te, whose troops were nearby, but they failed to win over the important Gen. Chang Fa-kuei and evacuated Nanchang on August 5. They then retreated towards Kuangtung Province, whence the Northern Expedition had started in 1926, and managed to capture Swatow, a port in eastern Kuangtung, but were defeated and dispersed in engagements in September and October.⁴

*Marx himself had envisaged a Communist revolution as the final stage of capitalist development, and it could well be argued that a peasant-based Communist revolution, or even a Communist revolution in a nonindustrialized, largely precapitalist society, was unorthodox Marxism. But the break with Marxian orthodoxy originated with Lenin and the Comintern leadership and not with Mao Tse-tung. If Comintern pronouncements are taken as defining Communist orthodoxy, then Mao's "Report . . .," of which a translation was published in the Soviet Union, was not unorthodox. In fact, the long section on class analysis could be considered as rather uncritical Communist orthodoxy, merely fitting Chinese agrarian society into categories already drawn up by Lenin to describe Russian agrarian society.

Meanwhile, on September 12, 1927, Mao Tse-tung, assisted by some troops which had taken the Communist side, led a peasant rising in Hunan, known as the Autumn Harvest Rising. It was quickly suppressed and Mao retreated to Ching-kang-shan, a mountain area on the Hunan-Kiangsi border. According to Mao's own account, his forces in October 1927 consisted of only two units, each with 60 rifles in bad repair.⁵

In November 1927, Mao was censured by the Central Committee for his "purely military viewpoint" in this unsuccessful rising. His main fault seems to have been to advocate a revolutionary movement in the countryside under purely Communist leadership a few months before this became official party policy. It may, however, be argued that he was, and remained, to some extent unorthodox in his emphasis on the purely military aspects of the revolution.

A number of other peasant risings in Hunan, Hupeh, and Kiangsi provinces produced similar results, failing to spread or to capture any places of importance but leaving small Communist units in mountain areas. In the Kuangtung Province hsien of Haifeng and Lofeng, about 150 miles east of Canton, a peasant rising started on October 30, 1927. This was an area in which peasant organization—started as early as 1922 by P'eng P'ai, a Communist from a powerful local family—had developed great strength during the period of Communist-Kuomintang alliance. The rising had some initial success and a "soviet" government was proclaimed in November, but the Kuomintang had completely reconquered the area by April 1928.⁶

Finally on December 11, 1927, the Communists staged a rising in Canton, the Canton Commune. This was very quickly suppressed by the Kuomintang Gen. Li Chi-shen, who then proceeded to a general massacre of Communists in the city. A Communist source states that seven or eight thousand persons were killed.⁷ Most non-Communist accounts agree that this rising never had any prospect of success and that it was urged on the local Communist organization by the Comintern adviser. There was evidence that the Soviet consulate in Canton was involved and, on December 14, the Nanking (Kuomintang) government ordered the closing of all Soviet consulates and trade agencies.

Thus, at the beginning of 1928, the fortunes of the Chinese Communist Party were at their lowest point. Some underground organization remained in the cities but losses had been very heavy. Open insurgency was confined to a number of small and scattered guerrilla units in mountainous areas. Even when Mao Tse-tung had been joined in April 1928 by the remnants of Chu Te's troops from the Nanchang revolt, their total force amounted to only about 10,000 men and 2,000 rifles.⁸

Renewed Communist Efforts, 1928-36

The next eight years were to see another complete cycle in the fortunes of the Chinese Communist Party. Although by the end of 1933 Communist forces had expanded to some 300,000 and claimed control over areas with a population of about 10 million, they were forced to abandon

their main base areas by 1936, leaving only scattered guerrilla units, while their regular armies reduced to "a few tens of thousands,"⁹ controlled only a rather remote base area with a population under 1.5 million.

Communist Recruits

Discussing the composition of his forces in 1928, Mao Tse-tung made clear that he considered "the backbone of the Fourth Red Army" to be the regular Kuomintang troops who had taken the Communist side at the time of the Nanchang Revolt and the workers and peasants who had joined the 1927 risings.¹⁰ However, he explained that these regular troops had lost about two-thirds of their original numbers and that the early worker and peasant recruits had also sustained heavy losses, so that these categories were, in 1928, far outnumbered by prisoners from the anti-Communist forces and local peasant recruits. Other sources report that Mao had also incorporated a number of local bandit units. Mao admitted that a considerable part of the army would have to be classified as lumpenproletariat* by class origin, but he argued that, with proper political education and enough political organization in the army, even former warlord soldiers could become politically reliable and good fighters.

As the Communist areas expanded, the proportion of local peasant recruits must have increased. A curious feature of the Red Army which persisted throughout this period was the considerable number of extremely youthful recruits. A number of men who later held quite high positions in the Chinese Communist organization started their careers by joining the Red Army at the age of 11 or 12. Also, throughout the whole period, prisoners and deserters remained an important source of manpower. The Red Army had no radio communications and no proper medical service until these were developed by technical officers captured from the anti-Communist forces. The accounts of all the unsuccessful anti-Communist campaigns up to 1933 claim figures of Communist-held prisoners and deserters running into the tens of thousands—and nearly all these men were presumably recruited into the Communist forces.

Conversion and Indoctrination

It was not too difficult to win over most of the prisoners. The warlord armies had been purely mercenary and in Chinese society soldiering was considered a disreputable occupation to which men turned only as a last resort. In the Communist forces, the former warlord soldiers were treated with a degree of personal respect which they had seldom received from their former officers and were given education which they had never received from non-Communist society. Most recruits, whether former warlord soldiers, children, or local peasants, were illiterate, but learned to read and write in the army.

*The criminal or semicriminal portion of the proletariat as opposed to the class-conscious workers.

Mao Tse-tung laid great stress on the importance of political education and the system of political commissars in the army. The men were taught that they were fighting for a noble cause and the salvation of their country. At the end of 1929, Mao Tse-tung still complained about the influence of Utopian ideas—demands for absolute equality within the army and ultra-democracy ("let the lower levels discuss all problems first, and then let the higher levels decide")—and about the lack of discipline in some units. But these defects were becoming less serious.¹¹ The strong points of the Red Army were its good discipline and high morale on political indoctrination, its superior intelligence work based on organization of the population in its base areas, and its very high mobility based on its capacity to make rapid marches through mountain country.

Arms and Ammunition

For equipment and ammunition, the Red Army depended almost entirely on captured supplies. There was no way in which supplies could be sent from the Soviet Union except by smuggling them across long stretches of territory held by the National Government, and there is no evidence that this occurred. The Communist base areas were very backward economically—with virtually no industry beyond the handicraft level and with very few skilled workers or technicians—so that local manufacture of arms never reached the scale which it did in the anti-Japanese base areas of a later period, though there may have been some production of hand-grenades charged with black powder.

As a result, most Red Army units had considerably more men than rifles. Perhaps between one-half and two-thirds of the men were armed, with considerable variations between different units. In May 1931, for example, the National Government estimated that there were a total of 117,400 men with 57,750 rifles, 768 machineguns, 74 mortars and 29 cannon in Mao's forces.¹²

Communist Land Policies

The Communist policy of this period was to confiscate the land of class enemies and to distribute it among class allies. Collectivization of agriculture remained an ultimate objective but it was considered to be a "left deviation" to foreshadow this in current land regulations. The Communist policy brought some real benefits to those who had been at the bottom of the old society: those who had received land and had participated in the liquidation of landlord families had a strong interest in the survival of the Communist regime. Also, in a system where traditional government had been largely exploitative and recent government even more so, any new regime which made some effort to govern in the interests of the people and offered some popular participation in government could win some general support.

However, although the Communists won very strong support from a part of the population, they were generally hampered by their doctrinaire policies. Only the larger landlords at one

extreme and the landless laborers and poor peasants at the other really fitted the Communist doctrine of class war in the countryside. In between, there was a continuous range which was hard to classify. For example, a tenant farmer who hired some labor was, in his role as a tenant, "exploited"; but, as an employer, he was himself an "exploiter." Different groups in the party leadership disagreed about the exact criteria by which people should be classified as class allies or class enemies. Professor Hsiao Tso-liang's research¹³ has shown that land regulations varied between different periods and different areas and that these variations may be related to changes in the balance of power within the party. The result of all this was to alienate important sections of the population whose support could have been won by more moderate and less doctrinaire policies. Mao Tse-tung himself criticized an "ultraleft" policy which, he claimed, had unnecessarily turned the "petty bourgeoisie" against the Communists.¹⁴ But his own land policies turned increasingly against the more prosperous peasants when the Comintern line shifted to follow Stalin's campaign against the kulaks, a similar group in Russia.

Organization for Insurgency

According to Mao, the basic principles of Communist strategy had been worked out by May 1928 and, before 1930, the Central Committee had accepted the basic formula, expressed in 16 Chinese characters: "Enemy advances, we retreat; enemy camps, we harass; enemy tires, we attack; enemy retreats, we pursue."¹⁵ Beyond this formula, the Communists divided their forces into the Red Army and the Red Guards. The former was a well-trained and highly mobile force, equipped with the best of the available arms; and it could be concentrated for serious battles. The Red Guards were local partisans used for police duty and intelligence work or as guides for the Red Army; but they lacked the training or equipment to do more than harass any regular enemy force. Even this division was a subject of internal controversy: Li Li-san apparently advocated a concentration of all arms under the Red Army while, at the other extreme, other Communists advocated general guerrilla warfare by small dispersed units.

Communist Expansion and the Chinese Soviet Republic

Up to 1930, there was a fairly steady expansion of Communist insurgency. Though the Communists suffered some defeats and temporarily lost control of some areas, they won more victories—capturing large quantities of weapons and ammunition, gaining in numbers through prisoners and deserters; and, on balance, extending and consolidating their base areas.

Mao Tse-tung and Chu Te, starting from Ching-kang-shan on the Huan-Kiangsi border, moved their main force into southern and eastern Kiangsi. On February 10, 1929, they destroyed an enemy division in a battle near Juichin and expanded operations into Fukien and toward the Fukien-Kuangtung border. The Ching-kang-shan area was temporarily lost and then reoccupied by Communist forces later in the year. This area in southeastern Kiangsi became

the main Communist base and Juichin the Communist capital, where on December 11, 1931, the Chinese Soviet Republic was proclaimed.¹⁶

During the same period, other Communist military leaders, such as Ho Lung in western Hunan and Hsü Hsiang-ch'ien on the Hupeh-Honan-Anhui border were expanding their forces and extending the "soviet" areas they controlled. At one time, they were stronger than the Communist forces under Mao and Chu in Kiangsi. By 1930, the Communists had become a fairly formidable military force.

Internal Policy Conflicts

Developments in 1930, however, illustrated a serious weakness of the Chinese Communist organization. The relationship between political doctrine and strategic doctrine was so close that shifts in the balance of power in the party leadership or a new directive from the Comintern could produce changes in military strategy for which there was no justification in the military situation. In his account of the first year of operations in the Ching-kang-shan area, Mao Tse-tung complained of unreasonable and rapidly changing directives from the Hunan Provincial Committee and argued that these had caused military setbacks. Certainly the Central Committee, operating at that time underground in Shanghai, must have been rather out of touch with military operations in the countryside. (Different sources, and even the same source on different occasions, disagree about when the Central Committee moved to the Kiangsi base area. It seems quite possible that there was no definite single date but a piecemeal transfer of bits of the Central Committee organization after 1930.)

The "Li Li-san Line"—A Proletariat-Based Revolution

The clearest example of the confusion caused in military strategy by political doctrine was exemplified by the so-called "Li Li-san line" in 1930. Li Li-san had become one of the most important figures in the Central Committee after the deposition of Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai* at the 6th National Congress in July 1928 and had become the leader of the party in June 1929, a position which he retained until November 1930. There is some controversy as to whether the line associated with his name was his own idea or whether Li Li-san was simply following Comintern directives; but this is irrelevant for present purposes. The two political judgments behind the Li Li-san line were, first, that China had entered a situation of "revolutionary rising tide," and second, that the Communist Party should try to acquire a proletarian base as opposed to a purely

* Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai had succeeded Ch'en Tu-hsiu when the latter was deposed in 1927 as a scapegoat for the Communist defeat.

peasant base.* The conclusion that logically followed these two judgments was that the time had come for the Chinese Communist Party to use its military force to conquer major cities with an industrial proletariat.

The only major industrial center within striking distance of the Red armies was Wuhan, and in April 1930 an offensive was launched against Wuhan from bases both north and south of the Yangtze River.¹⁷ On July 29, 1930, the Third Red Army managed to capture Changsha, the capital of Hunan Province, but, instead of advancing northward toward Wuhan, the main force of the Red Army then moved south on August 1; and the city was recaptured by the National Government aided by foreign gunboats on August 9. An attack on Nanchang by the First Red Army on August 1 was also a failure. Unwilling to admit that its strategy was mistaken, the Central Committee called for a renewed attack on Changsha despite the lack of heavy artillery. The attack was staged at the beginning of September, but the defenses of the city had meanwhile been strengthened and the second attack was a complete failure. Mao Tse-tung and Chu Te, as commanders of the main forces involved and initially against the entire operation, insisted on a withdrawal. Finally, in November 1930, Li Li-san was attacked in a letter from the Comintern and ordered to Moscow.[†] By any sensible appraisal of the situation in 1930, the Communists had had no prospect of capturing and holding major cities.

The Li Li-san strategy, which had proved a complete failure, resulted from the desire to force reality into conformity with Communist theory. Whereas in 1926 Communist Party membership had been 67 percent proletarian and only 5 percent peasant, by early 1930, only 8 percent were workers and only 2 percent industrial workers. If one believed that a Communist Party ought in some empirical sense to represent the proletariat, as Li Li-san perhaps did, then the conquest of some major cities was necessary. But the estimate of a "revolutionary rising tide" in China was far from reality. In this case one may speculate that the faulty judgment came from the Comintern, which may have assumed that developments in China were following the same trend as in the West, where the economic crisis of 1930 was producing conditions more favorable for revolution. China, however, was still largely insulated from the world depression by the automatic devaluation of its silver standard currency. Industrial workers in China were not ready to revolt to support a Red Army attack from the countryside. On the contrary, they had become disillusioned with the attempts of Communist-led trade unions to call strikes for

*While there was disagreement about how far a Communist revolution could be based on the peasants, all Communists **agreed on** using the peasants for the revolution as opposed to making the revolution for the peasants. After Mao came to power in 1949, he announced a shift of emphasis from the countryside to the city proletariat and the elections for the People's Congress gave urban votes eight times the weighing of rural votes.

[†]Li Li-san went to the Soviet Union after his fall from power, whence he returned in 1945 with the Soviet Army to Manchuria. He now holds a quite minor position in the Chinese Communist organization.

political reasons and had been turning to Kuomintang-sponsored trade unions which called strikes only for better wages or working conditions. Though there was an increasing number of strikes, this was no evidence of Communist strength in the cities.

Defensive Warfare—The Strategy of Mao Tse-tung

When offensives against the Communist areas increased in scale, from 1930 on, the Communists became occupied with the problems of defensive warfare. Mao argued that, while the Red Army could properly divide its forces for expansion when the enemy was quiescent, the proper reaction to an enemy offensive was concentration. Furthermore, Red Army leaders needed to decide on a terminal area where the army might concentrate in retreat. Normally, this would be within the Communist base area, both because such areas were mountainous and likely to offer the most favorable terrain and because the organized population could help in reporting enemy movements and in concealing those of the Red Army. Since this strategy would still allow enemy forces to penetrate the Red area, Mao felt it was necessary to make careful preparations for an enemy offensive by collecting supplies, strengthening the political organization, and preparing the people for the suffering that might be necessary for victory. He pointed out that, so long as the main Red Army force was still at large and active, it would distract the enemy from activities within the Red area.

In preparing for an active defense, Mao laid great stress on the importance of winning the initial battle, since this would upset the enemy's plans for encirclement and give the Red Army fresh opportunities. Therefore, he stipulated that the Red Army should be extremely careful to choose the weaker units of the enemy, wait if necessary to secure favorable terrain, and make forced marches to secure concentration at the right point. Also, since the Red Army depended on capture for its arms and ammunition, it should aim, said Mao, at winning the type of battle in which an enemy force could be captured or wiped out. A battle from which the enemy could retreat in fairly good order might be a victory by ordinary standards, but it was not, in Mao's eyes, very useful to the Red Army.¹⁸ Despite Mao's prescription for a strategic victory, the period from the middle of 1933 to the end of 1934 saw the defeat of Communist forces in South China (discussion of which is concentrated in the "Counterinsurgency" section of this paper).

According to Mao Tse-tung and his followers, the Moscow-trained Chinese Communists, the "Returned Students," who took over control of the party after the fall of Li Li-san in late 1930, were responsible for errors in strategy equally as serious as those of Li. Mao criticized the policies adopted in 1932 as based on unrealistic estimates of the strength of the Red Army relative to its enemies. He ridiculed slogans such as "Attack on all fronts," "Seize key cities," and "Don't give up an inch of territory" and denigrated a current Red theory that the Kuomintang armies had become merely an "auxiliary force" of foreign imperialism. Such ideas, Mao felt, had led to Communist failure in the Hupeh-Honan-Anhui area.¹⁹ These overadventurous strategies,

Mao claimed, were followed by an overcautious one which in turn led to the loss of the South China base areas. Mao claimed that the Red Army could have defeated the Kuomintang by an offensive northward into Chekiang and the lower Yangtze valley at the end of 1933 while the National Government was occupied with hostilities against the Fukien revolt.²⁰ On the other hand, the strategy Mao advocated might well have led to a more complete and rapid Communist defeat. If the Fukien revolt had still been defeated, the Red Army would have found itself cut off in unfavorable territory.

The Long March Begins

From the middle of 1934, the Communist armies were in increasingly desperate straits as a result of the success of the Kuomintang blockade-line strategy. As the southern base areas became untenable, the Communists organized a series of withdrawals westward and northward, operations that became collectively known as the Long March. In July 1934 the Chinese Communists and the Red Army announced a "Northwards Anti-Japanese Expedition" ostensibly against the Japanese forces in North China. This probably indicated the decision to withdraw, although the main Communist force did not start its move until the middle of October. It managed to break through the first blockade line on October 21 and moved into northern Kuangtung. It broke through a second blockade line on November 5 and crossed the Hankow-Canton railway on November 15. During the same period, the Sixth and Second Red armies moved from their base areas farther west and managed to join up in eastern Kueichou Province on October 22.²¹ Some Communist units were left in the South China bases to fight a rearguard action, but they were soon reduced to small and scattered guerrilla groups. By January 1935, the main Communist forces from all the South China base areas had temporarily joined up in Kueichou Province.

Mao Becomes Party Leader

Meanwhile, at a conference held at Tsun-yi, Mao Tse-tung now became the leader of the Chinese Communist Party. Before the evacuation of the South China base areas, Mao's position in the party had apparently been weakening.*²² He had lost his position as political commissar to Chu Te's forces in 1932 and his position in the Chinese Soviet Government had also been hurt. But the failure in South China had in turn weakened the position of the "Returned Student" group, which had been in control of the party, and strengthened that of Mao, who had criticized their strategy.

*For example, new land regulations in 1934 had eliminated a number of points which Mao had specially favored. Mao's position also seems to have been challenged at a later period of the Long March by Chang Kuo-t'ao, who came from a base area in Szechuan and whose forces had suffered smaller losses, but the events of this period are still obscure.

Communist Survival—The Yen-an Republic

The retreat on the Long March—marked by great hardship and heavy casualties—took the Communists through Kueichou, Yunnan, Chinghai, Szechuan, and Kansu. All these areas were where the influence of the National Government was weak and where, therefore, Communist movements were opposed mainly by poor-quality warlord troops, though they were also pursued by some central government forces. Even so, the account of the Long March in Edgar Snow's Red Star Over China shows that the survival of Mao's forces was partly a matter of luck. On several occasions a few hours' delay or slightly stronger local garrisons would have left the Red forces locked between uncrossable rivers and pursuing central government troops.

The retreating forces, numbering considerably fewer than the 100,000 troops who started from Kiangsi, finally joined up in 1936 in a small base area which had been earlier developed in 1931 on the Shensi-Kansu border. This Communist base area expanded during late 1936 and a Communist offensive was launched into Shansi Province, east of the Yellow River, but was repulsed. On January 1, 1937, Mao announced the formation of a new Communist government, the Chinese People's Soviet Republic. Yen-an was now officially declared the Red capital. Meanwhile, late in 1936, new events were occurring which would produce an official truce in operations between the Communists and Kuomintang.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

After the fairly rapid defeat of the initial Communist risings in 1927, counterinsurgency operations fell into four main periods. Up to the middle of 1930, counterinsurgency was mainly in the hands of local provincial forces. Then followed a period in which the National Government organized a series of large-scale campaigns against the main Communist areas with very limited results. In 1933-34, a new counterinsurgency strategy finally proved successful and compelled the Communists to abandon their main base areas. Finally, in 1935-36, the National Government attempted to destroy the Communist forces during their retreat and started operations against the new, much smaller main base area, but this period ended inconclusively with a truce.

Problems of the Kuomintang Forces

According to Mao Tse-tung, the ability of the Communists to develop insurgency depended on the failure of the anti-Communist forces to make effective use of their resources. One factor in this failure was a reluctance to admit the potential danger of insurgency or the importance of acting against it before the insurgents had had time to build up their organization. National Government publicity always tried to describe the Red armies as merely bandits and it is likely that many people in responsible positions initially believed the problem was no more than banditry.

A more important factor, however, was that any effort against the Communists was continually distracted by other conflicts. Although the Kuomintang National Government, which was established at Nanking in 1927, obtained more control over China than any previous republican regime, it never managed to eliminate warlordism completely. For example, the original Kuomintang army suffered fairly heavy losses, especially in the battle of Chumtien against the best of the warlord armies, that of Chang Tso-lin. The war with Chang for control of North China continued until the summer of 1928. In 1929, there was fighting between the National Government and the Kuangsi warlords, Li Tsung-jen and Pai Chung-hsi, who had been allies at the beginning of the Northern Expedition. In addition, the extension of Kuomintang power to North China depended on an alliance with two other North China warlords, Yen Hsi-shan and Feng Yü-hsiang.

In 1930, these two warlords, with the support of Chiang's chief rival, Wang Ching-wei, tried to set up a rival government in North China, with the result that a civil war continued for several months. Largely because forces normally defending Changsha had been withdrawn for operations against Yen Hsi-shan and Feng Yü-hsiang, the Communists were able to capture Changsha in 1930.

In 1931, the Japanese started their conquest of Manchuria. In January 1932, heavy fighting with Japanese forces broke out in Shanghai and intermittent fighting with the Japanese in North China and Inner Mongolia continued until the Tangku Truce in May 1933. This truce in turn led to disagreements between the National Government and local leaders in South China. In November 1933, the Kuomintang's Nineteenth Route Army, which had borne the brunt of the fighting in Shanghai in 1932, joined with South China leaders to proclaim a rival government in Fukien. This government, which actually signed a truce agreement with the Communists on November 21, 1933, was not defeated until January 1934. These were only some of the major conflicts involving the National Government and precluding any concentration of its effort against Communist insurgency.

Many provincial governments were equally distracted by conflicts among local leaders, and in many cases these conflicts directly influenced counterinsurgency operations. For instance, Mao Tse-tung reported that an offensive by Kiangsi troops against the insurgent Ching-kang-shan area was broken off in July 1928 because of a battle between two Kiangsi generals.²³ Of course, Communist operations were also hampered by factional struggles, and there were some instances of fighting between different Communist forces; but such troubles on the Communist side were never so serious as those on the Kuomintang side.

The insecure position of the National Government had an even more serious effect on the quality of the troops used against the Communists. The victory of the Kuomintang's Northern Expedition in 1926-27 had depended on the new style of the politically indoctrinated army built up in Kuangtung since 1923. But even before the conquest of the Yangtze valley, this army had

been considerably diluted. From the beginning of the Northern Expedition it had some warlord allies, and it followed the normal practice of the warlord period by incorporating defeated forces and giving new positions to opposing generals who would defect and join the Kuomintang side. The dilution was increased after the break with the Communists in the summer of 1927.

Attempts to Strengthen the Kuomintang Army

As a result, the National Government laid great stress, between 1928 and 1937, on building up a strong and well-trained central government army. In this it benefited greatly from German assistance. A group of German military advisers acting in a private professional capacity included men who had held important positions in the German Army during World War I. The Germans remained in China until 1938, when the Japanese made strong requests to the German Government to insist on their return to Germany.²⁴ Great progress was made in developing a well-trained army, and in July 1933 the National Government set up a special training school at Lushan, Kiangsi Province, for officers taking part in anti-Communist operations. But the best troops were needed to maintain the superiority of the central government over possible rivals; if they had been committed to counterinsurgency operations, the central government would have been less able to cope with the various non-Communist attempts to set up rival regimes. It was only in July 1931, in the third major campaign against the main Communist base areas, that troops directly commanded by Chiang Kai-shek were used, and even then they were only one-third of the total force.²⁵ Consequently, many of the troops used against the Communists were second-rate units or forces which the National Government did not trust.

This use of poor-quality troops caused the failure of many of the anti-Communist campaigns. Most of the successful Communist operations described by Mao Tse-tung depended on concentrating Communist forces against Nationalist units known to be of poor quality. And these inferior troops were not merely ineffective but strongly countereffective. National Government units which abandoned their weapons or surrendered became the main source of weapons and ammunition for the Red armies and an important source of their manpower.

Infiltration of the Communist Underground

By 1930, the National Government assumed an increasingly important role in counterinsurgent activities. One of the most important of its operations was against the Communist underground apparatus. In 1930, U. T. Hsü was put in charge of a special section of the central headquarters of the Kuomintang to deal with the Communist underground operating in National Government areas. At the time of the break with the Kuomintang in 1927, the Communist organization had been very strong, in the cities, controlling the trade unions and workers' organizations and supported by many of the intellectuals. Though they had suffered severe losses in 1927, they had remained strong enough to build a very effective organization with elaborate

arrangements for cover. Hsü²⁶ therefore insisted that the workers in his organization know their enemy, and he ordered them to study "the history of Russian Communism, Communist theory, Communist party structure, and the tactics and principles of their activities." Viewing the struggle largely as a battle of ideologies, Hsü was convinced that Sun Yat-sen's principles were superior to communism, that most Communists had become followers of Marx and Lenin through dissatisfaction with existing conditions, and that they could in fact be converted to more reasonable views.

His efforts were therefore aimed at the conversion of captured Communists. He insisted that converts demonstrate the genuineness of their conversion by giving all possible information and help against the Communist organization. Although he found that it was possible to apply the necessary psychological pressure to obtain conversion only when the alternative was death, Hsü also insisted that threats without conversion could not secure true cooperation from a captured Communist. Through the work of Hsü, the Kuomintang was able to penetrate the Communist organization. When the Communists reacted by building up a new terrorist organization which concentrated on the assassination of Communist defectors and Hsü's agents, Hsü's organization was eventually able to infiltrate and eliminate the new Communist underground. Unfortunately for the counterinsurgency effort, not all anti-Communist activity showed this level of sophistication—other National Government organizations were inclined to suppress any criticism of the Kuomintang as evidence of Communist sympathies, a policy which tended to boomerang.

Major Military Operations

Meanwhile, by the latter part of 1930, the National Government started a series of large-scale military campaigns against the Communist areas. An anti-Communist headquarters for the provinces of Hupeh, Hunan, and Kiangsi was set up at Hankow on October 23, 1930, and the first "encirclement and suppression" campaign, using about 100,000 men, started on November 2. Kuomintang forces were, however, completely defeated by the end of the year, and in one battle the Communists captured an entire force of about 9,000 men, including the divisional commander.²⁷

The second "encirclement and suppression" campaign started on February 10, 1931, under the command of Gen. Ho Ying-ch'in (who later became Minister of War) with headquarters at Nanchang. Still more troops were used—200,000 according to Mao Tse-tung and 300,000 to 400,000 according to T'ien Chia-ying—and the strategy was described in the words, "consolidating every step." This second offensive was also completely defeated by the end of May, and in the final battles the government lost over 20,000 rifles to the Communists.

The third "encirclement and suppression" campaign started in July 1931 under the command of Chiang Kai-shek, who used still more troops—300,000 according to Mao Tse-tung and 600,000 to

700,000 according to T'ien Chia-ying. For the first time these included some of the regular National Government divisions. The strategy this time was to "drive straight in" in an attempt to corner the main Communist forces against the Kun River. At one time Kuomintang forces penetrated a large part of the Communist base area, but they did not succeed in surrounding the main Communist army and had to withdraw with considerable losses after about three months' fighting.

Japanese Aggression Hinders Nationalist Operations

Counterinsurgency operations were then distracted by hostilities with Japan which started in Manchuria in September 1931 and erupted in Shanghai at the beginning of 1932. This not only gave the Communists a respite for consolidation and expansion, but also provided them with a powerful means of appealing to Chinese public opinion, by calling for an end to the civil war in order to present a united front to Japanese aggression. The Communist base on the Shensi-Kansu border was set up in October 1931 by scattered forces which organized themselves into the "Allied Anti-Imperialist Army." And on December 11, 1931, 20,000 men of the government's forces surrounding the Communist Ching-kang-shan base area mutinied and joined the Communists. The Nationalists lost a major propaganda point when the Chinese Soviet Republic declared war on Japan on April 25, 1932. This was purely a propaganda gesture as there was no point of possible contact between Communist and Japanese forces, but it succeeded in recording an anti-Japanese line on the Communist side in apparent contrast with the reluctance of the National Government to risk all out resistance to Japanese aggression.

Renewed Operations Fail to End Insurgency

Large-scale National Government operations against the Communists were not resumed until the summer of 1932. The main effort of the National Government's fourth offensive, which started in June 1932, was directed against the outlying Communist bases in west Hunan and on the Hupeh-Honan-Anhui border. Against the latter base area the operation was largely successful. On July 10, the main Communist forces from the Hupeh-Honan-Anhui base area were compelled to abandon their base and start a retreat into northwest Kiangsi. The campaign against the main Communist base areas in Kiangsi, however, did not start until February 7, 1933, and was defeated by the beginning of March. It did not seriously interrupt a steady expansion of this main Communist base.

This series of anti-Communist campaigns from mid-1930 to early 1933, which had marked the second period of counterinsurgency, had been aimed at eliminating Communist insurgency once and for all. In August 1931, Chiang Kai-shek had even talked of eliminating the Red armies within three months. Finally admitting the failure of the "encirclement and suppression" campaigns, the Nationalists now turned to a new strategy that was to prove more successful.

Nationalist Land Reform

The strategy of the third period (1933-34) was based on slower methods and more careful preparations than those of the previous period. There had already been some recognition that the Communist insurgency was based on a revolutionary situation in the countryside that might be removed or mitigated only by a program of reform. In June 1930, the National Government had issued a land reform law restricting rent to 37.5 percent* of the main crop and guaranteeing security of tenure for long-term tenant farmers.

When applied, the reform won both peasant support and increased production—the farmer with secure tenure and limited rent had real incentives. If the National Government had given a high priority in the 1930's and 1940's to implementing its own land law against the vested interests which opposed it, the result might have changed the whole history of China. In fact, it was applied seriously only in those areas recovered from the Communists where the original landlords had already been liquidated. There is some evidence that land reform did eliminate the revolutionary situation in these areas. When the civil war was resumed in 1946 one might have expected that the Communists would have tried to revive insurgency in their old South China base areas, but in fact there was almost no Communist activity south of the Yangtze before the victory of the regular Communist armies in 1949. Elsewhere in China the 1930 law remained a dead letter. In Chekiang Province, for example, the land reform program was dropped after an official who tried to enforce it had been assassinated, and in most areas there was not even an attempt to enforce it.

Control of Communities Near Communist Bases

Other measures were more effectively enforced to secure control of the population and to hinder Communist activities in areas surrounding their bases. A conference on anti-Communist operations in June 1932 ended in a decision to strengthen the government organization in areas adjoining the Communist bases by recruiting local militia and by organizing the people in the pao-chia system—a traditional Chinese organization under which the people in an area were formed into groups in which each member was held responsible for the others' conduct. Organization on these lines was started in August 1932. The pao-chia system was sometimes countereffective: people compromised by a Communist relative or friend might find that their safest course of action was to move into the Communist areas and join them. On balance, however, the system was effective in hindering Communist activities.

*The figure of 37.5 percent results from applying an old Kuomintang reform slogan—25 percent reduction in rents—to an assumed average rent of 50 percent. This land law ironically formed the basis for later Communist agrarian policy, from 1937 to 1945 during the war against Japan—which explains why the Chinese Communists were often called "agrarian reformers." It was also applied still later in the first stages of land reform in Taiwan, and Japanese land reform after 1945 followed rather similar principles.

A New Military Strategy — Blockade and Attack

In November 1932, conferees at Hankow had decided on a program of road building in South China to facilitate the movement of National Government armies, and in May 1933, plans were worked out for a strict blockade of the Communist base areas. These were almost purely agricultural and depended on outside trade for everything beyond the products of simple handicraft industry. In particular, they had no supplies of salt, important for health in places with a very hot summer climate. When it became effective through the building of fortified lines, this blockade played an important part in the Communist defeat.

The main military strategy of fort building was started in July 1933. Under this strategy, which may have been suggested by German military advisers, the Communist base areas were surrounded by a line of forts, connected where possible by a blockade ditch or other obstacle to prevent the movement of small groups at night. Efforts would then be made to organize the area outside the blockade line and, when it was judged that Communist activity had been eliminated, a new line of forts would be built reducing the Communist base area still further. Since the Communists had almost no artillery and only a few mortars, a fairly small garrison in a well-built fort could hold out for some time against attack by a much larger number of Communist troops. By January 1934, 2,900 forts had been built in Kiangsi and the number must have become very much larger in later stages of the campaign.

Attacks into the Communist base areas were continued and increasing use was made of aircraft to bomb Communist positions. Although the Red Army was able to score some local successes in 1934, its general position steadily deteriorated. The main body of the Red Army was forced to evacuate its main base area and begin the Long March in October 1934, as were other main units from other base areas in South and Central China.

Kuomintang Operations—An Unconsolidated Victory

Thus, Kuomintang operations of 1933-34 may be considered as an example of successful counterinsurgency. Although Communist forces remaining in South and Central China were not completely destroyed, they were reduced to small and scattered groups in the wilder mountain areas—a level of operations that could properly be described as little more than banditry, especially since genuine, nonpolitical banditry was endemic. And the former Communist base areas were brought so effectively under National Government control that there was no revival of insurgency even when the Communists might have been expected to try to revive it and the general authority of the National Government had been seriously weakened.

However, the successes of 1933-34 were not followed up in 1935-36. Counterinsurgency operations of 1935 against the retreating Communist forces were not a success, and the Red Army was able to reestablish itself in the Shensi-Kansu base area in 1936. On the other hand, government operations were not an unqualified failure because Communist losses during the

Long March were extremely heavy, and the Red Army of 1936 was only a small fraction of its 1934 strength. The National Government was only partly responsible for the failure to cut off the Communist retreat. The Long March went through provinces where local warlord influence remained powerful and where the National Government had very little control. Thus the moves of the Red armies were opposed almost entirely by local provincial forces which were mostly of very poor quality. Only the Muslim warlords in the northwest had troops good enough to fight some serious battles against the Communists. It is possible that the pursuing National Government troops did not make full use of their opportunities. Several writers have suggested that the National Government found the retreat of the Red armies a convenient excuse for sending troops into areas which had, until then, been almost completely under local warlord control.²⁸

If the National Government had at once attacked the much reduced Red Army in its smaller and poorer new base area with the same vigor as in the campaigns of 1933-34, the Chinese Communists would most probably have been eliminated as an organized military force. In fact the Nationalists did not use the effective but very expensive fort-and-blockade-line strategy and entrusted the main effort of anti-Communist operations to the Manchurian troops of Gen. Chang Hsueh-liang, who had been driven out of Manchuria by the Japanese in 1931. The Manchurian Army had been one of the better warlord armies but, in 1936, Manchurian troops were completely unreliable politically for operations against the Communists. Having been driven from their homes in Manchuria by the Japanese, they were especially susceptible to the Communist appeals to end the civil war and form a united front against Japanese imperialism.

Japanese Invasion Leads to a United Front

The Chinese Communists had been calling for a united front against Japan ever since 1931, but this was initially a "united front from below," i.e., ruling out the National Government leaders who were denounced as allies of Japanese imperialism. In 1935 the Comintern line changed to "united front from above," i.e., an alliance of all those willing to oppose the Axis powers. In the Far East, the Soviet leaders saw the Chinese National Government as potentially helpful in preventing a Japanese attack on Siberia, which was being advocated by elements in the Japanese Army.

During 1936, the Manchurian forces were increasingly influenced by Communist appeals. Military operations against the Communists slowed down, and there was actually a secret meeting between the Manchurian Gen. Chang Hsueh-liang and the Communist Chou En-lai. Increasing tension developed in Sian between the Manchurian organizations and National Government organizations still committed to the anti-Communist line. In December, Chiang Kai-shek went to Sian to try to straighten out the situation and was seized by Gen. Chang Hsueh-liang and Yang Hu-ch'eng. The Communists came in as mediators, almost certainly on instructions from the

Comintern, and secured Chiang Kai-shek's release. No formal agreement was recorded at the time, but the result of the Sian Incident was to produce an informal truce between the Kuomintang and the Communists, who now formed a new united front alliance in September 1937 after the start of the Sino-Japanese War.

The alliance provided that the Communists would accept Sun Yat-sen's principles as defining the basic policy needed for China, cease their insurrection against the National Government, abandon their policy of land confiscation, abolish their soviet government, and allow the Red Army to be incorporated into the National Army. In turn, the National Government recognized three Communist divisions as the Eighth Route Army (later the Eighteenth Group Army) and allotted them a garrison area in North Shensi. In addition, the Communist regime was allowed to function as a Special Area Government in the area which it controlled,* to have some local offices in the National Government areas, and to publish a newspaper in the capital.

Kuomintang Counterinsurgency Reviewed

The Japanese Army may be considered inadvertently responsible for the failure of Kuomintang counterinsurgency in China. If the National Government had been able to continue counterinsurgency operations and to apply the measures which had been successful in South China, it would almost certainly have been successful against the much smaller Red Army and much smaller Communist base area in Northwest China. But the Japanese Army was not content with its conquest of Manchuria and tried to bring the whole of North China under Japanese control through increasingly highhanded, provocative, and actually criminal policies.†

While its strength was steadily being increased with the buildup of the new central government army, the National Government wished to postpone a showdown with Japan. Nonetheless, it became steadily harder to resist the pressure of a public opinion growing ever more sympathetic to Communist appeals for a united front against Japanese aggression. Chiang Kai-shek's apparent failure to move vigorously against the invaders produced dissension within Nationalist ranks. The revolt of the Nineteenth Group Army in Fukien in 1934 had come largely from dissatisfaction with the National Government's failures to resist Japan, and the same was true for an attempt to set up a rival government in Canton in June 1936. Japanese intervention in China set the stage for the Sian Incident, which produced the end of counterinsurgency operations. The ensuing truce gave the Chinese Communists the opportunity for the expansion that led to their final postwar victory in China. Japanese Army leaders always claimed that one of

*In 1938 another area, Shansi-Chahar-Hopei was recognized by the National Government as a wartime regional government with status similar to that of a provincial government.

†F.g., Japanese agents protected by the Japanese Army in North China engaged in drug peddling and large-scale smuggling operations.

their major objectives was to prevent the growth of communism in China and, on this particular point, there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of their claim. But the actual results of their actions were the direct contrary of their intentions; they saved the Red Army in 1936 and, in 1937, gave the Communists the opportunity to win control of China.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

Between 1937 and 1945, the struggle between the Kuomintang and the Communists was subordinated to the struggle against the Japanese. The united front between the two Chinese parties was fairly effective through 1938, but started to break down in 1939, and any real cooperation between them ceased after 1940. There were actually many clashes between Communist and National Government forces, though these never developed into civil war. From 1943, National Government forces generally held a regular front against the Japanese, while the Communists concentrated on guerrilla operations in the countryside, between the cities and communication lines held by the Japanese. By far the most important factor in the National Government's failure to develop guerrilla operations was that it was much less effective than the Communists in developing the type of military and political organization needed to resist the increasing Japanese counterinsurgency effort.

Communist-Kuomintang relations during the war against Japan were both complicated and controversial. Each side accused the other of subordinating the national interest in fighting the Japanese invader to its own particular interest in opposing its internal Chinese rival, and each blamed the other for the clashes between their forces.*

The Situation at the End of World War II

By V-J Day in August 1945, the Communist army had expanded to about 900,000 regular troops plus several times this number in part-time village militia units. Outside the cities and communication lines held by the Japanese, the Communists controlled the greater part of the countryside in North China and important areas of East Central China with a total population of about 100 million. Compared with the 1937 situation this represented an immense increase in Communist strength relative to that of the Kuomintang. By this time, the Chinese Communist leaders believed that they were likely to win a renewed civil war with the Kuomintang, although they expected that such a war would continue for 10 or 12 years. In fact, they were to win in less than four years.

*The New Fourth Army Incident of January 1941 was by no means the first serious clash between Communist and National Government forces but only the first to receive general publicity.

Not only had the Communists used the opportunity offered by the war with Japan to increase their strength, but they had also won a large measure of genuine popular support. In the areas under their control, they had implemented a reformist land policy based on the National Government's own Land Law of 1930 and, equally important, they had reorganized local government and the tax system. Because the Communists had efficient taxation and used grain as the accounting unit, their areas were isolated from the effects of currency inflation and could offer efficient government. And although Communist troops were much less well equipped than National Government forces, they were better fed and better clothed and had higher morale and better discipline than most National Government units.

The National Government, on the other hand, had failed to use the patriotic surge of 1937-38 to put through the reforms that were really essential for a protracted war. At this time, educated Chinese would have been willing to work in the countryside and the vested interests opposed to land reform and an efficient taxation system could have been attacked, with justification, as saboteurs of the national war effort. When the Japanese advance eliminated the tax revenue from the major cities and from the customs service, the National Government, because it had not reorganized the countryside, was compelled to finance itself increasingly through inflation, with all its demoralizing effects. With the breakdown of the united front, the National Government became increasingly afraid of Communist influence. But while it tried to oppose and contain the Communists, it was never willing to compete with them. For example, several cases indicated that insurgency forces under Kuomintang leadership could resist the increasing Japanese pressure if a pattern of organization similar to that of the Communists was followed—but the leaders of these more successful units complained that the National Government never seemed to understand or approve what they were doing.

A View of Chiang Kai-shek's Role

The ultimate responsibility for the increasing demoralization of the National Government organization seems to rest with Chiang Kai-shek, in the sense that he, as the dominant Kuomintang figure, might have been able to prevent or reverse the decline. The Generalissimo had shown a consistent devotion to nationalism. His aim throughout had been a unified, independent, strong, and prosperous China and, like Gen. Charles de Gaulle of France, he was inclined to identify himself with his country. However, his nationalism also included belief in the Confucian social tradition, and his book, China's Destiny, published in 1943, contained passages condemning both communism and Western liberalism as foreign ideologies unsuitable for China. His social ideal was a paternalistic, authoritarian system.

In the period from 1927 to 1937, Chiang had shown great tenacity of purpose in extending the effective authority of the National Government and in maintaining the unpopular policy of postponing a showdown with Japan while building up government strength. When war with Japan

finally came, he reaped the reward of his tenacity by emerging as the accepted leader of national resistance. He must certainly be credited with maintaining Chinese resistance through periods when others felt that China's position was hopeless and that it should seek a settlement with Japan.

Chiang's basic weakness appears to have been an unwillingness to shift the basis of his power from personal loyalty and political intrigue to popular support as the national leader acting for the national interest. The National Government organization included many competent, honest, and devoted men; but they were seldom given effective backing when national interests came into conflict with the interests of Chiang Kai-shek's relatives or personal followers. In a report written in July 1948, U. S. Ambassador J. Leighton Stuart, a close personal friend of Chiang Kai-shek, summed up this basic weakness, ". . . the Generalissimo is generally and directly blamed . . . for his inability to take any effective action to cope with the situation. He is doubtless aware of this criticism and of its implication. He responds to it only by trying to safeguard his own position through placing individuals on whose loyalty he can personally count, in positions of trust, regardless of the fact that these individuals have long records of incompetence or corruption or both." ²⁹

Postwar Regrouping

The long-postponed civil war between the Communists and the Nationalists was triggered by the Japanese surrender. The National Government, through the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) in the Pacific, ordered the Japanese Army in China to surrender only to National Government forces. Meanwhile, Gen. Chu Te, as Communist Commander in Chief, issued an order demanding that the Japanese surrender to Chinese Communist forces. Most of the Chinese troops who had been in Japanese service transferred or resumed their allegiance to the National Government and continued to fight the Communists. The United States transported National Government troops to the ports and some major cities of North China; and U.S. Marines landed, ostensibly to disarm the Japanese, but actually to hold a few ports and communications between Peking and Tientsin until Nationalist forces could arrive and take over.

In Manchuria, the Russians began by keeping out the regular troops of both sides, but they allowed the local Chinese Communist underground to emerge and organize armed forces, ostensibly as "self-defense" or "anti-bandit" units. As the Russian Army withdrew in the beginning of 1946, after looting Manchurian industry as "war booty," they left behind large stocks of Japanese arms which fell into Communist hands.

The Failure of U.S. Mediation and Advice

The U. S. Ambassador, Gen. Patrick Hurley, tried to mediate a settlement, but his efforts were based on a completely false estimate of the situation. He refused to believe the estimates

of Communist strength made by U. S. Army observers and thought that the Communists would come to terms as soon as the publication of the Sino-Soviet Treaty showed that they would not receive Soviet support in a civil war. Despite a joint declaration by Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Tse-tung on October 10, 1945, some large-scale battles occurred a few weeks later.

Following the resignation of Ambassador Hurley, Gen. George Catlett Marshall went to China in December 1945 as President Harry Truman's special representative. His orders were to try to persuade the Chinese Government "to call a national conference of representatives of the major political elements to bring about the unification of China and, concurrently, to effect a cessation of hostilities, particularly in North China."³⁰ This mission had a good chance of success, and General Marshall secured a much longer pause in hostilities than had Ambassador Hurley. Nonetheless, Marshall was unable to obtain an effective truce in Manchuria, and fighting spread increasingly in other areas during the latter half of 1946.

In 1946 the National Government armies were much stronger than the Communists, about three million to about one million, with a very clear superiority in equipment. But, from the very beginning, Gen. Chiang Kai-shek refused to follow U. S. Gen. Albert C. Wedemeyer's* advice to "concentrate his efforts upon establishing control in North China and upon the prompt execution of political and official reforms designed to remove the practice of corruption by officials and to eliminate prohibitive taxes."³¹

National Government Accepts Battle and Is Defeated

The National Government seems to have grossly overestimated its military capability and to have believed that, if the Marshall mediation broke down into general civil war, the Communists could be completely defeated in a matter of months. In fact, the operations of 1946 and the beginning of 1947 showed a good deal of apparent success for the National Government. The Communists were driven from many cities, and most of the railway network in North China was brought under National Government control. Even in Manchuria the National Government made considerable gains. However, the main Communist armies remained intact, and the National Government conspicuously failed to carry out reforms or to provide honest and competent government in the areas it controlled.

The Communist armies steadily improved their equipment, partly through Japanese stocks from Manchuria but increasingly through American equipment captured from Kuomintang forces. By 1947, they were strong enough to launch an offensive in Manchuria and, by the latter part of the year, they had started counteroffensives in North and Central China.

*During World War II, General Wedemeyer was commander of United States Forces in the China Theater and Chiang Kai-shek's Chief of Staff. His advice was still available to the Generalissimo for a time after the war.

By 1948, National Government forces were hopelessly overextended but refused to retreat and consolidate. A strategy of clinging to the main cities left large armies cut off in Manchuria, supplied only by airlift. A belated attempt to break out in October 1948 ended with a disastrous defeat at Chinchow and the surrender of all National Government forces in Manchuria. Farther south, the Communists captured Tsinan, the capital of Shantung Province, at the end of September; and, in November, they destroyed the main National Government army in North Central China in a battle at Hsuechow. The commander in North China, an able general who had been starved of supplies because he did not belong to the Whampoa clique, surrendered Peking after a short siege. The Communists entered the city in February 1949. In April, they crossed to the south side of the Yangtze without any effective opposition and occupied Shanghai and Nanking. By the end of 1949, they had completed their conquest of the Chinese mainland. By this time, Chiang Kai-shek, who had left the presidency in January 1949, had retreated with many of his followers to the island of Taiwan, where he set up a new Nationalist government. Li Tsung-jen, who had briefly replaced Chiang, refused to sign an agreement with the Communists and fled, eventually to the United States.

The Kuomintang Defeat Evaluated

The underlying reason for the defeat of the National Government was, in the opinion of this writer, a failure in leadership in both civil and military affairs. An informant who had been with Communist forces in Manchuria told the author that National Government troops had fought well and successfully in the early stages of the war, but that the Communists were able to defeat them because no two Kuomintang generals would cooperate. American military observers also considered that the key battle of Chinchow was lost because "the lack of any coordinating procedure produced complete confusion on all operating levels."³²

Officials in Taiwan have said that, if only they had carried out on the mainland the reforms later carried out on Taiwan, the Communists would never have won. And this is probably true. The Nationalists could have competed with the Communists for popular support: after 1948, the Communists abandoned their very successful reformist land policy and went back to the class warfare policies of the Chinese Soviet Republic, thereby, as they themselves admitted, alienating important sections of the peasantry. If the National Government had admitted that its situation was critical and that the only way to avert defeat was through a drastic program of reform, it might have been possible to overcome the vested interests opposing reform and to replace the often incompetent and corrupt men holding positions of authority with able and honest men. In fact, however, right into 1948, Kuomintang leaders continued to claim that the Communists could be defeated in a matter of months and blamed Communist agents or "badly informed" foreign observers for spreading defeatist talk about a critical situation.³³ American advisers were helpless because they were never able to break down this Kuomintang refusal to face reality. It

required the shock treatment of complete defeat on the mainland to produce a willingness to purge crooks and incompetents and to implement an effective reform program.

The U.S. Role Reviewed

The involvement of the United States in China from 1941 to 1949 is an extremely complicated* and controversial subject.³⁴ The general impression is one of confusion in policy, lack of background knowledge, and some highly unsuitable top-level appointments—all compounded by attempts to withhold from Congress and the American public the information necessary for any reasoned discussion of the alternatives actually open to U.S. policy.³⁵ The most serious confusion in the crucial years was a failure to choose between mutually incompatible policies: helping the Kuomintang to win a civil war or acting as an impartial mediator to secure a settlement that could prevent civil war. By trying to follow both policies simultaneously, the United States got the worst of both worlds—it incurred the odium of intervention in a Chinese civil war and it failed to prevent the defeat of the side it was backing.

A Military Conclusion

For a study of insurgency and counterinsurgency, the period from 1945 to 1949 has only limited relevance because operations soon reached a scale of conventional warfare. The most interesting counterinsurgency period is that from 1927 to 1935, and it offers a number of lessons.

In 1928 and 1929, the National Government made the common mistake of underestimating the potential danger from insurgency. Because the Communist forces were dismissed as mere bandits and opposed only by inferior local forces, they were able to expand and to consolidate their base areas.

From 1930 to 1932, the National Government made serious efforts against Communist insurgency but tried to handle it by the methods of conventional warfare. The series of offensives against the Communist base areas were planned in terms of bringing the Communist armies to battle and winning an essentially military victory in a matter of months. These tactics failed.

In 1933, the National Government shifted to a really effective strategy. The foundation of this was the consolidation of National Government control in the areas adjoining the Communist bases. The Communist underground organization was infiltrated and seriously weakened. Registration and control of the population under the pao-chia system and the organization of local militia units restricted insurgent movement outside the base areas and helped to enforce an effective blockade of the Communist bases. And the agrarian reform program, even though rather halfheartedly applied, enabled the National Government to consolidate its control of areas recovered

*Intensive study could probably yield some very valuable lessons about the mistakes to avoid in situations where support is offered a government that needs drastic reorganization to become viable.

from the insurgents. On the purely military side, the fort-and-blockade-line strategy was expensive as it tied down many troops, but it enabled the Nationalists steadily and gradually to reduce the insurgent area. An important aspect of this strategy was that the continued attacks into the insurgent base areas and the use of air power against insurgent positions were not seen as measures to secure a rapid victory but only as measures to weaken the insurgents and to accelerate the gradual tightening of the fort-and-blockade-line system. By the end of 1934, Communist forces were trying desperately to escape to some new base area.

If Japanese pressure had not halted counterinsurgency operations, it appears almost certain that Chiang's 1933-34 strategy would have completely succeeded.

NOTES

¹ The areas are from Administrative Districts of the Republic of China, published by the National Government in 1947, and the population figures from an estimate made in 1930 by the Department of Internal Affairs and given in Chung-kuo Ti-li Hsin Chi (A New Record of Chinese Geography), by Yang Wen-hsun et al. (Shanghai, 1935). The figures have been rounded because other sources give slightly differing figures, even for the area of provinces, and the population estimates are highly uncertain. For instance, the 1953 census gave the population of Hunan as 44,215,000 and that of Kiangsi as 16,773,000 (from The Statesman's Year Book, 1964).

² For a detailed study, see The Chinese Gentry and The Income of the Chinese Gentry, by Chang-li (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1955 and 1962, respectively).

³ I would like to thank Professor Hsiao Tao-liang of the University of Taiwan for calling my attention to some of these Comintern directives.

⁴ Translations of several contemporary Communist accounts of this episode are given in an article by Martin Wilbur, "The Ashes of Defeat," The China Quarterly, No. 18 (April-June 1964).

⁵ Mao Tse-tung, "The Struggle in the Ching kang Mountains," Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-tung (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1961), p. 20.

⁶ The best account of the Hailofeng Soviet is in two articles by Professor Eto Shinkichi in The China Quarterly, Nos. 8 and 9 (October-December 1961 and January-March 1962). There is also an account by a Korean Communist participant in The Song of Ariran: The Life Story of a Korean Rebel, by Nym Wales.

⁷ T'ien Chia-ying, Min-kuo i lai Ta Shih Nien Piao (Calendar of Main Events Since the Republic) (Yenan: Hsin Hua Publishing Co., 1946), p. 131.

⁸ Ibid., p. 139.

⁹ Mao Tse-tung, Selected Military Writings, p. 91.

¹⁰ Mao Tse-tung, "The Struggle in the Ching kang Mountains."

¹¹ Mao Tse-tung, "On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party," Selected Military Writings, pp. 51-62.

¹² Tang Leang-li, Suppressing Communist Banditry in China (Shanghai: China United Press, 1934), pp. 114-115. The appendix includes a number of tables giving National Government estimates of Red Army strength at different dates.

¹³ See "Selected Reading" following this study for description of Professor Hsiao's research.

¹⁴ Mao Tse-tung, "The Struggle in the Ching kang Mountains."

¹⁵ Mao Tse-tung, "Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War," Selected Military Writings, p. 109.

¹⁶ T'ien Chia-ying, Min-kuo i lai Ta Shih Nien Piao, pp. 141, 176.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 157.

¹⁸ Mao Tse-tung, "Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War," passim.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 102, 109-111.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 127, 143-144.

²¹Dates from T'ien Chia-ying, Min-kuo i lai Ta Shih Nien Piao.

²²Information from Professor Hsiao Tso-liang.

²³Mao Tse-tung, "The Struggle in the Chingkaing Mountains," p. 23.

²⁴For details, see Frederick F. Liu, A Military History of Modern China (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956).

²⁵Mao Tse-tung, "Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War," p. 125.

²⁶The account which follows is based on his book, The Invisible Conflict (Hong Kong: China Viewpoints, 1958).

²⁷Dates and figures throughout from Mao Tse-tung, Selected Military Writings, and T'ien Chia-ying, Min-kuo i lai Ta Shih Nien Piao.

²⁸For example, O. Edmund Clubb, 20th Century China (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1964), p. 202.

²⁹U. S. Department of State, United States Relations With China, Publication 3573, Far Eastern Series 30 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1949), Annex 156 (b). This publication is commonly known as the China White Paper.

³⁰Ibid., p. 605.

³¹Ibid., p. 131.

³²Ibid., p. 321.

³³For a good account of this period, see A. Doak Barnett's China on the Eve of Communist Takeover (New York: Praeger, 1963)

³⁴The best documented single book on the subject of U. S. involvement is by Tang Tsou, The American Failure in China (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963).

³⁵To give a few examples: Chiang Kai-shek's book China's Destiny was published in 1943 and was required reading for Chinese students, but it became available to the American public only in 1946, through an unauthorized translation. During the war, authorities in Washington refused to allow even Congressmen to see an English translation. Again, in his study The American Failure in China, Tang Tsou argues that a major mistake in U. S. policy was to withhold the report of the Wedemeyer Mission of 1947 until 1949 because, if it had been published at the time, American policy could have been debated on the basis of an expert estimate of the amount of effort which would have been required to prevent a Communist victory. Yet again, the U. S. Consul General in Mukden was the first American official to experience the Communist treatment of American diplomatic officers; but, when he got back to Washington, he was reprimanded for talking briefly to correspondents on his arrival and was immediately given a new posting to Africa.

This withholding of information does not fit a pattern of one-sided political prejudice. What it does seem to show is that U. S. authorities never realized the importance of an informed public opinion for the effective working of a democratic system. American policy remained in a state of confusion partly, at least, because the authorities were able to suppress information which would have enabled the public to know that there were important aspects of the situation of which the official policy line took no account. The operative slogan was apparently "Anything to avoid immediate trouble."

SELECTED READING

Author's Note: Unfortunately, this is the period in the history of the Chinese Communist Party for which least information is available, or, at least, readily available and in English. There are a number of good studies covering various aspects of developments before 1928—the early years of the Communist Party, Sun Yat-sen's relations with the Communists, the development of the Communist-Kuomintang alliance, and so on. From then on, however, the Chinese Communist Party was operating either underground in the cities or else in country areas largely cut off from the outside world. And the work which has been published in English has concentrated on political developments, the internal disputes within the Communist Party, or relations between the Chinese Communist Party and the Comintern, rather than on the military developments more directly relevant for a study of insurgency and counterinsurgency. A great deal of potential source material is available in Taiwan, from the Communist side as well as from the Kuomintang side, but little or no work has been done on this to produce a study of military developments.

When Gen. Ch'en Ch'eng was in charge of the anti-Communist campaign, he instructed his troops to collect all the written material they found. The Ch'en Ch'eng archives thus have more source material for this period than would be available in Peking, since the Communists could not carry many records on the Long March. The Ministry of Justice Library in Taiwan also has considerable files of Communist publications. Working from these sources, Professor Hsiao Tso-liang of the University of Taiwan has completed a very important study of Chinese Communist agrarian policy and has published a selection of documents on the power struggles within the party. He hopes to proceed to a study of military developments. If this study is made, it will greatly increase our knowledge about the early period of Chinese Communist insurgency.

This study has made considerable use of T'ien Chia-ying's Min-kuo i lai Ta Shih Nien Piao (Calendar of Main Events Since the Republic), (Yenan): Hsin Hua Publishing Co., 1946), because it gives a definitely dated record of major operations but, as the book tries to record all major events in China between 1911 and 1936, it gives very little detail. Also, as a Communist publication, it is inclined to leave out Communist defeats; and, since it was published in the Communist areas in 1946, there are not likely to be many copies in the United States.

However, although the source material is inadequate, it is possible to get a general picture of operations for the main Communist base area in Kiangsi, Hunan, and Fukien. And one can trace some important factors which influenced the effectiveness both of insurgency and of counterinsurgency.

Clubb, O. Edmund. 20th Century China. New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1964. This has quite a lot of background information but only a few pages on the counterinsurgency operations of the 1927-34 period.

Hsu, U. T. The Invisible Conflict. Hongkong: China Viewpoints, P.O. Box K-5271, 1958. An interesting but little-known book by the man who was in charge of operations against the underground Communist organization in the Kuomintang areas.

Liu, Frederick F. A Military History of Modern China. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956.

Mao Tse-tung. Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-tung. Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1961. Mao Tse-tung is perhaps the most important source. This volume contains five items dealing with the period up to 1936: (1) "Why Is It That Red Political Power Can Exist in China?" (October 1928), (2) "The Struggle in the Ching-kang Mountains" (November

1928), (3) "On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party" (December 1929), (4) "A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire" (January 1930), and (5) "Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War" (December 1936). These are extremely important for an understanding of Chinese Communist strategy but they give only a fragmentary account of actual operations. "The Struggle in the Chinggang Mountains," which was written as a report to the Central Committee, comes closest to being a coherent history, but it covers only the first year of operations in one area and it is clear that Mao's primary concern is to defend his record against critics. In "Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War," which is as long as all the other items together, a number of operations are described or mentioned, but only as illustrations of strategic principles.

O'Ballance, Edgar. The Red Army of China. New York: Praeger, 1963. This study appears at first sight to be fairly complete and detailed but, on examination, proves to be unreliable on certain matters of fact. For example, the account of the Haifeng Soviet (p. 42) describes P'eng P'ai as a bandit from Szechuan. In fact he came from a wealthy family in Haifeng hsien, joined the Communist Party after graduating from Waseda University, Tokyo, was appointed as Chief of the Bureau of Education in Haifeng in 1921, and resigned the following year to work on peasant organization. Again, a list of Communist regions in 1938 includes an "East Hopei Soviet Area." This is wrong on no less than three counts: (1) A rising in the summer of 1938 was rapidly and completely suppressed by the Japanese, and guerrilla activities did not revive on any appreciable scale until after 1941, so East Hopei was a Communist area for only a few weeks in 1938; (2) in the Communist organization, East Hopei was part of the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei region which O'Ballance also lists; (3) in the period of the wartime united front, it would have been entirely contrary to Chinese Communist policy to use the term "soviet" for one of their areas.

Smedley, Agnes. China's Red Army Marches. New York: Vanguard Press, 1934. An idealized account of the Red Army and some of its operations which cannot be taken as a serious study. Other sources from the Communist side are even more fragmentary.

Edgar. Red Star Over China. New York: Modern Library, 1944. First published in 1938, this is still a useful source for information on the Long March—the retreat from the South China base areas to the northwest—though it should be remembered that, when Snow interviewed the Communist leaders in 1936, some forces had still not reached the new base area so that he heard only the story of the main force under Mao Tse-tung. Also, his Communist informants were naturally reticent about the disputes within the party during this period.

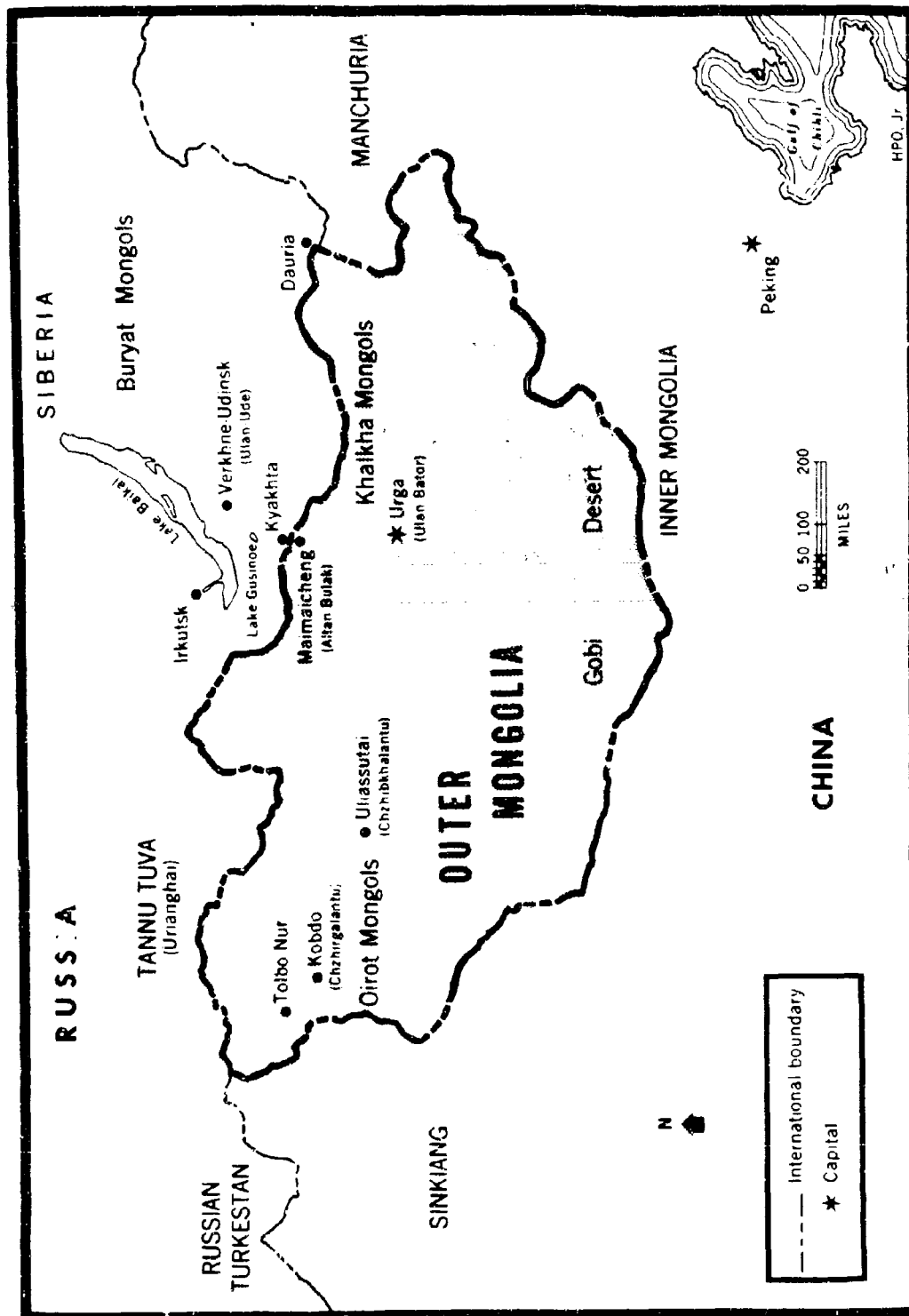
Tang Leang-li. Suppressing Communist Banditry in China. Shanghai: China United Press, 1934. One of a series of public relations books for the foreign reader on the accomplishments of the National Government, this book has quite a lot of interesting information, but cannot be considered as a serious or in any way complete study.

U.S. Department of State. United States Relations With China. Publication 3773, Far Eastern Series 30. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1949. This publication is commonly known as the China White Paper.

Chapter Three

**OUTER MONGOLIA
1919-1921**

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The Mongolian experience—which saw White Russian troops, conservative Mongols, Chinese, Japanese, and other anti-Soviet forces ineffectively operating against the Red Army and Mongolian revolutionaries—is perhaps unique in the annals of counterinsurgency, both in the extremity of foreign involvement in an internal conflict and in the almost total lack of cooperation among counterinsurgents; the failure of the counterinsurgency ended in the establishment of the first Soviet satellite.

BACKGROUND

Three times the size of Texas and slightly larger than Alaska, Outer Mongolia, now officially termed the Mongolian People's Republic, is a large (600,000 square miles) Central Asian country landlocked between China on the south and east and Russia on the north and west. Its continental position makes for very cold winters and very hot summers. No part of the country has adequate rainfall; much is semidesert. In 1919, its population was probably no more than one-half million.¹

In the early 1900's, Mongolia's primitive economy was based almost exclusively on the herding of livestock—sheep, goats, cattle, horses, and camels. Most of the people lived as nomads, in felt tents called yurts, with little furniture and few possessions, but with enough to eat. Wealth was measured by the size of one's herd, particularly by the number of horses. To own no animals was to be dispossessed and an outcast in this society—but almost everyone owned some livestock.² The religious hierarchy—practicing a form of Buddhism known as Lamaism—owned perhaps a fifth of the country's total livestock resources and controlled the lives of 125,000 lamas (priests) and their many servants and semislaves.³ Secular princes also managed large herds and controlled many dependent people. A few thousand Russian farmers were in northwestern Mongolia at this time, and several thousand Chinese—either peasants or merchants—were scattered throughout the country.⁴

Mongolia's giant neighbors—China and Russia—have been integrally linked with Mongolian history ever since the 13th century, when both were conquered by Genghis Khan, Mongolia's most

illustrious son and almost legendary figure, who carried Mongol power to its zenith. In the years of decline which followed, the situation was reversed and Mongol princes became the vassals of China's Manchu rulers. From the 17th century to the beginning of the 20th, these rulers governed Mongolia by a system of indirect rule which respected Mongolian autonomy.

Under Chinese Control

By 1911, China dominated Outer Mongolia economically and culturally, as well as politically. Trade was almost entirely in the hands of Chinese merchants, who supplied the goods most desired by the Mongols: tea, clothing, and all manner of Buddhist artifacts. Thousands of Chinese spent most of their lives in Mongolia, and constituted the country's middle class and most of its entrepreneurs. Many leading Mongols, especially the secular princes, had studied in China and spoke Chinese. Mongols were accustomed to Chinese control.

Nevertheless, the Mongols generally resented Chinese attitudes of superiority. Despite centuries of Chinese rule in Mongolia, no significant Chinese scholarship in Mongolian studies ever developed, and this was deeply resented by Mongol intellectuals. Even the large herd-owners of Outer Mongolia were heavily indebted to Chinese traders and moneylenders, and they chafed under the burden. Anti-Chinese feeling was further aroused around 1900, when China—following a pattern set in Inner Mongolia—began to encourage the emigration of Chinese settlers to Outer Mongolia. As nomads, the Mongols looked with contempt on the Chinese who settled among them to farm. Inner Mongols, who had fled to Outer Mongolia when their own lands were overrun by Chinese immigrants, fanned the flames of resentment and urged their fellow Mongols to resist Chinese expansion.⁵ Anti-Chinese sentiment among all classes of Mongols thus provided the xenophobic element which seems to be a critical factor in the development of nationalism.

Russian Influence

In their resentment against Chinese domination and expansion, the Mongols naturally looked to Russia, whose influence in Central Asia had been growing in the late 19th century as a counterbalancing force. Russia's greatest attraction for the Mongols was the fact that Russians lived far away to the north and seemed unlikely to settle on Mongolian lands in any significant number. In comparison with China, Russia represented progress and the modern world, and this appealed to younger Mongols. Mongol intellectuals were much impressed by Russian scholarship and activity in Mongolian studies.⁶ The Buryat Mongols of eastern Siberia, citizens of the tsarist Russian Empire who spoke the Mongolian language and practiced the Lamaist religion, constituted a kind of cultural bridge across which Russian ideas and influence traveled to Outer Mongolia.⁷ Buryat agents and interpreters played a significant role in ultimately establishing Russian control over the country. Russians and Buryats published the first Mongolian language

newspaper and established the first secular Mongolian school in Urga. They also introduced veterinary medicine, as well as human medicine, among the Mongols.

Establishment of Autonomous Outer Mongolia

The opportunity to throw off the Chinese yoke came in 1911, when the Manchu dynasty of China was overthrown. A nascent Mongolian nationalist movement declared Mongolia independent and established as its emperor the Jebtsun Damba Khutukhtu, head of the country's religious hierarchy and symbol of Mongolian unity. Russian support of this Mongolian revolution, combined with China's weakness at the time, enabled Mongolians to set up Autonomous Outer Mongolia. Autonomy in Mongolia was, however, a peculiar amalgam. A treaty between republican China and tsarist Russia finally recognized the Jebtsun Damba Khutukhtu as responsible for internal affairs, but it recognized Russia as responsible for Mongolia's external affairs and China in the limited role of nominal suzerain.⁸

The government of Autonomous Outer Mongolia was in essence a theocracy headed by the Jebtsun Damba Khutukhtu, leader of the local offshoot of Tibetan Buddhism which served as the national religion of the Mongols. It also contained at least the forms of parliamentary government. The Cabinet, composed of secular princes, exercised some real power, but the two houses of Parliament only talked. A "lama clique" fought the secular princes of the Cabinet for dominant influence over the Khutukhtu, who was the central figure in the country. A feudal lord as well as chief priest of the lama hierarchy, the "Living Buddha in Urga," as the Khutukhtu was called, was the wealthiest man in Outer Mongolia.⁹

Growth of Mongolian Nationalism

Mongolian nationalism was a weak but growing force at the time of the 1911 revolution. More and more Mongols were beginning to resent foreign interference and control. Increasingly after the turn of the century, they dreamed of uniting all Mongols into a self-governing Pan-Mongolian national state. To Mongolian nationalists, Autonomous Outer Mongolia, as constituted after 1911 under Russian and Chinese auspices, was only the first step in fulfilling that dream.

Mongolia's high lama, the Jebtsun Damba Khutukhtu, had always acted independently in his dealings with China, and more and more the Khutukhtu, and the city where he resided, known to Europeans as Urga,* came to be accepted as the center and focal point of Mongolian nationalism. The establishment of the Autonomous Government in Urga after the 1911 revolution naturally enhanced the prestige of the "Living Buddha in Urga" as a national figure. The Mongols of Inner Mongolia, still under Chinese control, supported the Urga government and pressed it to take more vigorous action. The Lamaist religion, the Mongolian language, the nomadic way of life,

*Urga was traditionally known to the Mongols as Ikhe Kuren, "Great Lamasery," but the city is officially known today as Ulan Bator.

and the historical legacy of Genghis Khan were the symbols that came to be regarded by Mongolian nationalists as tools for political unification. There was to be considerable disagreement, however, as to the particular form Mongolia's political unification would take.¹⁰

Obstacles to National Development

During the autonomous period (1911-19), Outer Mongolia's internal weaknesses were many and serious. The vast majority of the Mongols remained illiterate, backward, and generally apathetic to change of any kind. Lamas fought princes for control of the Khutukhtu's newly formed government, and many local leaders and groups resisted the central government in Urga. The Oirots, or Western Mongols, for example, known to the Europeans as Kalmuks and centered around Kobdo (now Chzhirgalantu), were completely unreconciled to the Urga government, which was dominated by the Northern, or Khalkha, Mongols, who are the majority Mongolian group.

Another obstacle to national development was the Lamaist church, which has been characterized as feudal, corrupt, and ridden with superstition. It is estimated that about half of Mongolia's male population at this time were lamas. Only about a third of the lamas lived permanently in lamaseries and were subject to any degree of institutional control; the others settled among the people or wandered about the country as beggars, holy men, and pseudo-doctors. Far from adhering to a life of celibacy, these mendicant lamas contributed greatly to the spread of the venereal diseases that plagued Mongolia in this period. The Lamaist church had a virtual monopoly over education in the country; however, the memorizing of prayers and rituals in the Tibetan language, which most of the lamas themselves did not understand, absorbed most of their intellectual energy.¹¹ A quarter of the total population were serfs of the Lamaist church, which levied its own taxes and functioned as a state within the newly formed state of Autonomous Outer Mongolia. The lama hierarchy successfully opposed the formation of a national army, perhaps more out of fear for its own power in the country than any sentiment of pacifism.¹²

The Autonomous Government lacked personnel with administrative and fiscal experience and ability, and graft and corruption sapped its strength and wasted its meager resources. Moreover, the leader of Mongolian nationalism, the Khutukhtu, was poorly cast for a hero's role. Noted for his profligacy and drunkenness, he was also blind and syphilitic. Under such conditions, the more progressive elements in the Autonomous Government at Urga looked to Russia for inspiration and guidance on the road to Mongolian national development.¹³

Russian Aid and Objectives

After 1911, Russia provided financial and advisory support to the Autonomous Government, although most of the tsarist Russian money invested in Outer Mongolia was wasted in graft, corruption, and inefficient undertakings. Perhaps the most notorious example of the fiscal irresponsibility occurred when the Khutukhtu used a Russian loan, intended to bolster his

deficit-plagued government, to purchase an elephant for his private zoo.¹⁴ There was some attempt to train and supply a small cadre of Mongolian military personnel; however, powerful lama influences prevented the formation of a Mongolian army.

The Russian Government was itself uncertain in its Mongolian policy, and many tsarist officials frankly opposed Russian activity in Outer Mongolia. Tsarist policy, vacillating and confused, tended in general to freeze Mongolia in its traditional feudal pattern, maintaining it as a buffer to keep China at a distance. Russian policy always stopped short of supporting Pan-Mongolian aspirations involving Inner Mongolia and Mongol lands in the tsarist empire, such as Urianghai (now Tannu Tuva).¹⁵

Chinese Forces Return

When the tsarist government collapsed in 1917 and the Russian Civil War broke out in 1918, Autonomous Outer Mongolia soon found itself deeply involved in a bitter internecine struggle between the Bolshevik (Red) forces of the revolutionary Soviet Government and the assorted White Russian and foreign elements who opposed the new regime. China took advantage of Russia's weakness in the Far East at this time to stage a return to Outer Mongolia; in late 1919, Chinese officials and a Chinese Army descended on Urga to put an end to Outer Mongolian autonomy. The chief impetus behind this action probably came from Chinese merchants and traders who had been unable to collect debts owed them by the Mongols since the 1911 revolution; however, there was also some concern in Peking over Russian and Japanese activities among the Mongolians. The period from 1919 to 1921 was a time of turmoil in Outer Mongolia, which became in fact one of the lesser theaters of the Russian Civil War.

INSURGENCY

The Mongolian insurgents comprised a very small group of young Mongols who for the most part had been educated in tsarist Russian schools and institutions. Mildly discontented and restive under the Khutukhtu's traditionalist government, they became active insurgents when foreign troops occupied Outer Mongolia. Their aims were not precisely defined, but their overriding concern was to free Mongolia from foreign domination and technological backwardness. In the beginning without a political philosophy, these young Mongols were revolutionary only to the extent that they felt a kind of malaise and dissatisfaction with their country's backwardness and shared a conviction that some reform was necessary. Particularly, they favored some sort of limitation on the overwhelmingly dominant Lamaist church. Their political convictions took on urgency only in late 1919, however, when the Chinese returned to Outer Mongolia and suppressed the Autonomous Government in Urga.

Leadership and Organization

The two principal insurgent leaders were Sukhe Bator, a popular military commander trained by the tsarist Russians, and Choibalsan, who had studied in Russian schools, spoke Russian fluently, and had contacts among Russian Bolsheviks living in Urga.

Of all the Mongolian insurgents, who probably included most of the leading Mongols desiring change and modernization, only Choibalsan clearly subscribed to Bolshevik ideas and Communist ideology. Choibalsan probably had the earliest and closest ties with Bolshevism. In 1913, when he was 17 years old, he attended a school in Urga founded by the leading Buryat Mongolian intellectual, Jamtsarano, who had Bolshevik sympathies. At least one of Choibalsan's teachers there was a Bolshevik. From 1914 to 1917, Choibalsan went to school in Irkutsk, Siberia, where he came into intimate contact with the Russian revolutionary movement. After Choibalsan returned to Urga in 1918 he was in close touch with Russian Bolsheviks in Mongolia.¹⁶

Sukhe Bator's connections with the Bolsheviks were less important, but he also knew and worked with Russians living in Mongolia, some of whom were Bolsheviks. When he was 14, Sukhe Bator worked as a coachman on the Urga-Verkhne-Udinsk route, which mainly served Russians. In 1913, he completed a Russian-taught machinegunners' course and served with the small Mongolian military outfit trained by the Russians at this time. One of these Russian military instructors was a Bolshevik. Later, in 1919, Sukhe Bator worked with Russians in the Autonomous Government's printing plant in Urga.¹⁷

Both of these young Mongols, in their early twenties at the time, were leaders of small revolutionary parties when the Chinese occupation began. In response to the Chinese invasion, they united their revolutionary circles in January 1920 to form a single organization that was to become the core of the insurgent movement in Outer Mongolia. Organization was casual at first, and the political influence of the movement was slight; but mounting Chinese oppression brought popular support to the fledgling revolutionary group, which was named the Mongolian Revolutionary Party. At the same time, Chinese police action deprived the organization of several of its more active members, and the movement soon found that it had to operate clandestinely and with much greater caution than had been necessary during the lax and permissive regime of the Jebtsun Damba Khutukhtu.

Foreign Sanctuary and Support

The Mongolian insurgents began looking for external assistance and a foreign sanctuary from which to operate against the Chinese occupiers. Naturally enough, the Urga revolutionaries looked north to the Russians, who were less than 200 miles away in Siberia. In the summer of 1920, they moved their headquarters into Russian territory.¹⁸

Since the Bolsheviks had by this time regained control of Siberia, it was to this Russian faction that the Mongol revolutionaries turned for support. The Bolsheviks were at first

reluctant to commit themselves to more than token assistance to the Mongolians, because of their own involvement in the Russian Civil War; but later the Red Army and Communist Party organization provided not only the desired sanctuary on Russian soil, but the philosophy, organization, training, supplies, and even most of the military forces operating in Outer Mongolia. This total involvement of the Soviet regime in the Mongolian nationalist revolution came about primarily as a result of a special military situation which developed in late 1920.

Following their defeat at the hands of the Red Army, remnants of Adm. Aleksandr Kolchak's White Russian Army fled across the border into Outer Mongolia in the fall of 1920. An officer in Kolchak's army, Baron Roman Fedorovitch Ungern von Sternberg, commanded a White Russian force which drove the Chinese from Urga in February 1921 and then invaded Russia but was beaten back by the Soviets. Thus, by 1921, there was perfect harmony of interests between the Mongol insurgents and the Russian Bolsheviks: Ungern-Sternberg's White Russians were now their common enemy. Freed from Chinese domination only to be subjected to another form of foreign oppression, the Mongols this time found that the Bolshevik Russians' aim to crush anti-Bolshevik forces coincided completely with their own aims to throw out the foreign oppressor.¹⁸

Close cooperation developed rapidly. In March 1921, the Mongolian insurgents held their first party congress in the Russian border town of Kyakhta, where they proclaimed the formation of a provisional revolutionary government of Mongolia, called the Mongolian People's Government. This same party congress also established the Mongolian Revolutionary Army, comprised of four regiments, with Sukhe Bator as commander in chief. A Mongolian language newspaper, Ünen ("Truth") was also published by the party in Kyakhta after the congress there.²⁰

Insurgents Blend Communism With Nationalism

The main lines of the revolutionary party's political program and objectives may be discerned from its documents and correspondence in the 1920-21 period, especially from the party oath of June 1920 and the party platform of March 1921. These indicate that the primary aims of the Mongolian revolutionary movement were the liberation of Outer Mongolia (first from the Chinese and later from the White Russians) and the restoration of Mongolian autonomy. The Jebtsun Damba Khutukhtu would be maintained as nominal head of state, but he would be limited in his powers. The princes would also be maintained but limited at first, and later they were to lose all their political privileges. Religion was to be "strengthened," but the details of how this was to come about were absent from party documents. The March 1921 platform stated:

Questions of external and internal policy, and also of religious life, questions of change of long-observed customs, traditions, and economic way-of-life, our Party will resolve according to the spirit of our times, the experience of the peoples of the world, and in conformity with the character of future changes in world events, in the interest of the welfare and progress of the Mongolian people. Thus,

branches which are useless or inimical, ... will be removed through sheer necessity, ... as far as possible by mild, and in border-cases by firm, measures.

These documents also repeated the hope of establishing a Pan-Mongolian union, although the exact form of such a union was not spelled out.²¹

The line was one of caution and called for a gradual approach to fundamental changes in Mongolian society. Lenin had specifically advised the Mongolian revolutionaries in November 1920 against transforming the Mongolian party into a Communist party, warning them not to attempt to alter the traditional culture of the Mongol arat (common people) too rapidly. Thus, the Communists clearly recognized the latent potentialities of Mongolian nationalism as a force with which they must come to terms if the revolutionary party was to survive in Mongolia.

Russian Civil War Spills Over Into Mongolia

Although some Mongolian revolutionaries were concerned over possible Russian domination and were eager to prevent the Red Army from invading Mongolia in pursuit of the White Russian forces, most of the Mongolian insurgents trusted the Bolsheviks. In any event, there was no practical way to avoid this intervention, which the Soviet Government regarded as a legitimate case of self-defense. Soviet troops and Mongolian revolutionary forces first crossed the borders of Outer Mongolia in June 1921, when Red Army units pursued Ungern-Sternberg's forces to the Mongolian border town of Maimaicheng (now Altan Bulak) after having defeated the Whites on Russian territory the day before. On this occasion, the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, G. V. Chicherin, informed the Chinese Government that the Whites' "extensive military operations... forced Russian troops to cross the Mongolian frontier."²² To the Mongols, the Soviets proclaimed that the Red Army would remain in Mongolia no longer than necessary "to defeat the common enemy: the Tsarist general, the bloody Ungern. . . ."²³

Little information is available on the nature of military operations by the Mongolian insurgents and their more numerous Russian allies against the White Russians. The Mongolian Revolutionary Army defeated the Chinese garrison at Maimaicheng in March 1921; most of the rest of the fighting lasted only a few months in the summer of 1921. The insurgents had superior intelligence information on their enemies' movements; swift nomad riders brought them word of White Russian and Chinese troop movements when telegraphic communications were not available. In June, insurgent forces chased Ungern-Sternberg from Russia to Mongolia and back into Russia again, defeating him on June 22, 1921, near Lake Gusinoe in southern Siberia,²⁴ and finally capturing the White Russian leader. By September most of the fighting was over.

Strength and Characteristics of Rebel Forces

The Red Army units involved in Outer Mongolia contained about 13,000 men, most of whom were cavalymen, while the Mongolian Revolutionary Army probably numbered only about 700

Mongols. Another 500 Mongolian revolutionaries were in operation around Kobdo in Western Mongolia, where the defeated White Russian forces attempted in September to put up a desperate "last stand." No casualty figures are available, but it is known that many Mongol leaders were killed in the several furious cavalry charges which took place in the course of this little-known campaign.

The Red Army and Mongolian insurgents apparently had the active support of the local population on both sides of the Russo-Mongolian frontier. By 1921, the White Russian opponents of the Soviet regime had thoroughly discredited their cause in the eyes of the Siberian peasants and Mongolian tribesmen, of whatever ethnic background; these people welcomed the order and stability that the more disciplined forces of the Bolshevik Party promised to bring to the area.

This degree of popular support, together with the hit-and-run nature of the insurgents' cavalry operations, which were largely a series of skirmishes by highly mobile small units, gave the Mongolian insurgency an aura of guerrilla warfare; but by comparison with the type of guerrilla operations in practice today, this insurgency cannot properly be described as an example of guerrilla warfare. Analogous in many ways to the type of punitive expeditions which characterized the "small wars" of the pre-World War I period, the Mongolian insurgency of 1919-21 illustrates one of the variants of behavior and operations in internal conflict.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

Those forces and groups active in Outer Mongolia during the 1919-21 period which, for purposes of this study, may be categorized as counterinsurgents included the Khalkha followers of the Jebtsun Damba Khutukhtu of Urga, the Western Mongols led by Ja Lama, the Chinese, and the White Russians under Ungern-Sternberg. In addition, there were also the supporters of the Japanese-sponsored "Dauria government," which added a complex element to the 1919 scene. Plagued by disunity and almost complete lack of common political objectives, these elements fought among themselves as much as they fought the Red Army and Mongolian revolutionaries.

In general, the counterinsurgents wanted to stop the clock, if not to turn it back: the Khutukhtu wanted to retain a traditional Mongolia; Ja Lama wanted to preserve the separateness of the Western Mongols; China wanted to restore its former dominance over Outer Mongolia; and the White Russians were primarily concerned with the internal struggle for power in Russia.

Japanese Sponsor the Dauria Government

Only the Japanese and their Buryat Mongolian allies possessed what might be described as an imaginative and essentially novel approach to Mongolia, but their ambitious plans were not practical under prevailing conditions. As early as February 1919, the Japanese, taking advantage of the chaos of the Russian Civil War, sponsored a meeting of Buryat Mongols, Manchurian

Mongols, and Inner Mongols which, on February 28, created the Dauria government in the Siberian town of Dauria. Under the leadership of the 29-year-old Ataman, Grigorii Mikhailovich Semenov, a White Russian military commander and Japanese agent, the Dauria government sought to establish a Pan-Mongolian state extending from the Lake Baikal area southward to Tibet and from Manchuria westward to Russian Turkestan. Including all of Outer Mongolia and Mongol lands then under Chinese and Russian control, this "Greater Mongolia" would have been a Japanese puppet state which would have realized Mongolian territorial aspirations at the expense of China and Russia, Japan's chief rivals in the Far East.

The success of the scheme depended, however, upon the Khutukhtu, and a delegation was sent to Urga in September 1919 to enlist his support. Probably realizing that Semenov would be the real power in the new government and that his own role would be that of a figurehead, the Khutukhtu refused to have anything to do with the idea. The Khalkha Mongol princes and lamas were suspicious of the foreigners and Buryat Mongols who were behind the movement, and the Chinese and Russian diplomatic representatives in Urga were for once in complete agreement that this Pan-Mongolian scheme was premature. Japan was then in no position to provide much more than inspiration and moral support; and, without the active collaboration of the Khalkha Mongol traditional elite, the Dauria government quickly collapsed.²⁵

Traditionalist Leaders Fail

Having lost most of his Russian advisers with the overthrow of the tsarist government in 1917 and having turned down the Japanese overture in early 1919, the Jebtsun Damba Khutukhtu came more and more under the influence of the lama clique, who opposed all progressive tendencies, including such "radical" ideas as the inoculation of cattle and the creation of a national Mongolian army. Totally inept as a national leader, the Khutukhtu was useful only as a symbol of Mongolian nationalism to the forces contending for power in that country.

A minor but colorful character in the counterinsurgent drama was Ja Lama, the warrior-priest and bandit chieftain of the Oirats, who lived in scattered settlements from western Mongolia to the Caspian Sea and were known collectively to the Russians as Kalmyks. The Oirats, although no less traditionalist than the lama-dominated Khalkhas, were more warlike, and Ja Lama had at his command an armed force of a few thousand warriors. Ja Lama rose to prominence when his Oirat followers defeated and massacred the Chinese garrison at Kobdo during the 1911 revolution. Later exiled to tsarist Russia for his brutality against foreigners in the Kobdo region, Ja Lama was released in 1918 and returned to Mongolia where, until his death in 1923, he led a band of assorted outlaws and political opponents of the Khutukhtu and the Chinese, as well as of the Bolsheviks and the Mongolian insurgents. Ja Lama was a dramatic personality who inspired a fanatical loyalty, but his influence never extended beyond the Oirat tribal area around Kobdo, except among the small band of brigands who followed him to his fortified lair in

the Gobi Desert, where they preyed on caravans moving between China and Sinkiang. The only political effect of the Oirois' separatist sentiment and Ja Lama's rabid xenophobia was to weaken the position of the Autonomous Government at Urga without providing any viable substitute.²⁶

Mongolia's two gigantic neighbors filled the power vacuum that prevailed in the country. First the Chinese (from late 1919 to early 1921) and later the White Russians functioned as the real counterinsurgents in Outer Mongolia, together with a handful of the indigenous Mongol population.

China Reasserts Its Sovereignty

The Chinese had begun their return to Outer Mongolia in 1919, when the Russians were embroiled in their own domestic troubles. Motivated by fears of Japanese influence in Outer Mongolia and by demands of Chinese merchants for the collection of debts owed them by the Mongols since the 1911 revolution, the Peking government instructed its chief representative in Urga, Cheng Yi, to negotiate with the Mongol princes for the termination of the Autonomous Government. Backed by a Chinese brigade of 4,000 soldiers sent into Outer Mongolia in September, Cheng Yi was finally able to extract from the feeble Khutukhtu a promise to abolish the Autonomous Government after final agreement on a treaty that would enumerate special privileges for the Khalkha Mongols under Chinese sovereignty. The high lama, doubtless hoping for a resurgence of Russian influence which would once again save Mongolian autonomy, was apparently playing for time in these negotiations with Cheng Yi.

The Khutukhtu's hopes were dashed, however, when Chinese Gen. Hsü Shu-tseng arrived in Urga in October 1919 with more troops. "Little Hsü," as he was commonly known, had no stomach for prolonged negotiations with the Khutukhtu and little respect for Peking's political representative, Cheng Yi. General Hsü issued an ultimatum in which he gave the Autonomous Outer Mongolian Government 36 hours to sign a petition requesting the Chinese Government to terminate the autonomous status of Outer Mongolia; otherwise he would escort the Khutukhtu and other officials of his government back to China proper. Under this threat, the Mongols finally agreed to the signing of the petition by various ministers of the Autonomous Government. With this concession, General Hsü was satisfied; he returned to Peking, where he explained the absence of the Khutukhtu's signature by saying that the high lama never personally signed any document. On November 22, 1919, the President of the Chinese Republic issued a mandate in which Mongolia's "most sincerely expressed" request was granted, and the old system that had obtained under the Manchu dynasty was essentially restored in Outer Mongolia.²⁷

Mongolia Under "Little Hsü" and Cheng Yi

At the same time, the Peking government recalled Cheng Yi and appointed General Hsü to administer the restored Mongol territory. "Little Hsü" proved to be a severe taskmaster, and

his brief but harsh rule in Outer Mongolia created considerable hostility among the Mongolians towards the Chinese; nevertheless, it effectively returned Chinese economic interests to their former position of dominance in the territory. Hsü's Mongolian policy apparently depended upon a system of bribes spread among Mongol princes and lamas, by which, with the threat of military force in the background, he hoped to keep the balance of power.

The Mongols were held responsible for provisioning most of the 8,000 Chinese troops in the country, and the Chinese merchants who had been driven out in 1911 returned, not only expecting repayment of old debts but asking for a high interest rate on these debts for the 8-year period of autonomy. The Chinese also demanded reparations for their losses in the 1911-12 revolt. The inhabitants of the Kobdo district, where heavy fighting had occurred, were required to pay 50,000 camels for old debts, interest, and reparations.

By the summer of 1920, there was a change in the political fortunes of General Hsü's faction in the Peking government, and "Little Hsü" left Urga, to be replaced by a civilian official. Cheng Yi eventually returned and relations between the Chinese and the Mongols began to improve. In September 1920, the administrative system was revamped to further placate the indigenous population. Cheng Yi was given the significant title of "Pacification Commissioner of the Urga, Uliassutai, Kobdo, and Urianghai regions," and plans were announced to include both Chinese and Mongols in the civil administration of the country. These reforms were never actually instituted, however, for the Chinese lost control of Outer Mongolia in the fall, when a White Russian army driven out of Russian territory by the Red Army suddenly attacked Urga.

After initially repulsing this White Russian attack, the Chinese general in command of the Urga garrison allowed his soldiers to plunder and kill many of the city's foreign population, chiefly Russians, in a manner described as reminiscent of the Boxer Rebellion.* At the same time, he infuriated the Mongols by surrounding the Khutukhtu's palace with Chinese soldiers and making him virtually a prisoner. Thus, Cheng Yi's efforts at pacification of the Mongols came to nothing amidst the turmoil of White Russian incursions and Chinese warlord terrorism.²²

Ungern-Sternberg Espouses the Fight Against the Rebels

The leader of the White Russian forces was Baron Roman Fedorovich Ungern von Sternberg, a follower of Semenov and an officer in Admiral Kolchak's White Army, which the Bolsheviks had broken up in 1920.²³ Ungern-Sternberg, as he was generally known, was a Baltic German aristocrat who had served as a career officer in the tsarist Russian army. When he was sent to Autonomous Outer Mongolia with a tsarist military mission before World War I, Ungern-Sternberg immersed himself in the lore and culture of the Mongols. A quixotic and romantic personality, who claimed descent from Genghis Khan, the 39-year-old White Russian baron was

*See Ch. 1, "China (1898-1901)."

converted to Buddhism and dreamed of world conquest. He has been generally described as sadistic and insane. Certainly unstable and completely unrealistic in his assessment of the forces ranged against him, Ungern-Sternberg cherished an implacable hatred of the Bolshevik revolutionaries and their Mongolian cohorts.³⁰

When, on February 3, 1921, the large Chinese garrison defending Urga finally surrendered to the White Russian attackers, Ungern-Sternberg began a systematic reign of terror in which every known Bolshevik or Bolshevik sympathizer was summarily shot. Espousing the slogans and goals of Pan-Mongolianism, the White Russian adventurer won the initial support of the indigenous population, who by this time had had enough of Chinese economic oppression and indignities.³¹

The Khutukhtu's Reactions

Although the Khutukhtu had probably long recognized the Mongolian Revolutionary Party as the enemy of the traditional Mongolia he sought to preserve, it was not until February 1921—after control of his city had passed to the White Russians—that he took a firm stand against the revolutionaries. He then issued a proclamation warning his people against "the Red movement which is the enemy of the people of the whole world." "It is," he stated, "opposed to God, princes, and true virtue, and deadly to the great purpose of creating a Mongol state." Forbidding his subjects to "believe and follow the words of the Red Party faction," the Khutukhtu ordered "Sukhe Bator and the others whose names appear in the party's manifesto... personally to come forward to submit to the Bogdo Khagan [the Khutukhtu]. If they do not conform, they are to be liquidated immediately by force."³²

This edict by the high lama provided the basis for cooperation for a brief time between Mongolian traditionalists and the White Russians, who controlled the only military forces in the Urga region at this time. After a few months of White Russian occupation, however, the Khutukhtu realized that he was being used by Ungern-Sternberg and sent an emissary to Peking to ask the Chinese to return and liberate Mongolia from the White Russians.³³ But oriental intrigue could not save the Khutukhtu at this moment. The Chinese were in no position to send another army into Outer Mongolia and were divided in their councils. The Japanese, for their part, were content with Ungern-Sternberg's regime in Urga and were unofficially supporting the White Russian adventure, now that Semenov's Dauria scheme had collapsed, and there was never any hope that Ja Lama's Oirat warriors in the Kobdo region would come to the aid of the Khalkha Mongols.³⁴

By the summer of 1921, it was clear that the real fight in Mongolia was to be between the White Russian army of Ungern-Sternberg and the Red Army of the Bolsheviks in nearby Siberia. The indigenous Mongol population was scarcely involved in the battles, fought as often on Russian as on Mongolian terrain, which would decide the fate of this ancient Central Asian land.

White Russian Strength and Objectives

Ungern-Sternberg's forces consisted of only about a thousand cavalry troops when he first entered Mongolia in October 1920, but total White Russian forces in the country by the summer of 1921 probably exceeded 10,000. These forces, mostly cavalry troops, included Semenov's 2,000 or more men, chiefly Buryat Mongols and Manchurians, and about 4,000 White Russians who were operating around Kobdo. About 40 Japanese, including several staff officers, were attached to Ungern-Sternberg's headquarters and functioned as his personal bodyguard when he entered Urga in February. The Japanese also supplied much of the military equipment and armaments used by the White Russians.³⁵

The overall strategic objective of these assorted anti-Bolshevik forces was a desperate and last-ditch attempt to overthrow the Soviet regime in Russia, or, failing that, at least to carve out a non-Communist buffer state in eastern Siberia. The nearest thing to a coordinated tactical plan of operations was worked out in April 1921, when Ungern-Sternberg, Semenov, and other White Russian commanders held a secret meeting in the Chinese capital of Peking. Their plan called for a two-pronged attack on Russia, with Ungern-Sternberg moving northward from Urga to cross the border at Kyakhta and attack the Bolshevik stronghold of Verkhne-Udinsk, while White Russian forces around Kobdo simultaneously invaded Tannu Tuva.³⁶

White Russian Drive Fails

In May 1921, Ungern-Sternberg moved north from Urga as planned; drove the small insurgent garrison out of Maimaicheng, which the Mongolian Revolutionary Army had seized from the Chinese earlier in the year; captured Kyakhta; and pushed on towards Verkhne-Udinsk. For several weeks, Ungern-Sternberg chased, and was chased by, the Red Army and Mongolian insurgent bands throughout a vast territory on both sides of the Russo-Mongolian border. These military operations were essentially conventional cavalry skirmishes and there was little positional warfare. Firm casualty figures are not available, although it is believed that most of the White Russians were executed once they fell into Red hands. On June 22, the White Russian force was defeated by the Red Army, which pressed on to take Urga on July 6. Eventually captured, Baron Ungern-Sternberg's colorful career came to an end on September 15, 1921, when he too was shot by the Red Army.*

The other White Russian counterinsurgent offensive north of Kobdo was equally unavailing. Here the route into Tannu Tuva was blocked by a determined band of Mongolian revolutionaries who held out for 42 days at Tolbo Nor before finally surrendering to the White Russian siege force. By this time, however, Ungern-Sternberg had been defeated and it was only a matter of time before the revolutionary Red Army moved into western Mongolia to crush the last of the

*Sources disagree on the date and place of Ungern-Sternberg's final capture, but the date of his execution is well established.

White resistance. The last White Russian commander in Mongolia was captured on December 15, 1921.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

With the Red Army's occupation of Urga in July 1921, Russia displaced China as the dominant foreign power in Outer Mongolia, ironically without ever fighting the Chinese. This military situation, which brought the Mongolian revolutionaries to power, was to have profound and lasting political results. Outer Mongolia became the first Soviet satellite state and, at the time of this writing in early 1964, the Soviet Union still remains the dominant foreign power in Mongolia. However, China continued after 1921 to insist that Outer Mongolia was still part of China, and it was not until 1946 that the Kuomintang government finally recognized Mongolian "independence." Nonetheless, this borderland country continues today to be one of the irritants in the Sino-Soviet dispute.

The First Soviet Satellite

The Mongolian revolutionary regime, which the Red Army installed in Urga, followed the Leninist line of gradualism in underdeveloped areas. The Jebtsun Damba Khutukhtu was deprived of his political powers but kept as the nominal head of the Mongol state. When he died in 1924, however, the regime refused to allow the selection of a successor. The Lamaist church continued to exist, but by the 1930's it had been deprived of its property and thus of its power in the country. Although not a Communist state in the sense of the Soviet Union after its 1917 revolution, the Mongolian People's Republic, as it was officially constituted in 1924, was definitely a one-part state modeled after the soviet form of government as closely as Mongolia's primitive society would permit.

Most of the Mongolian revolutionaries of the 1919-21 period later came to occupy important positions in the regime and party. During the first decade after 1921, Buryat Mongols were the central figures in Soviet activity in Mongolia, and many of these Russianized Mongols held high positions in the regime until indigenous Mongol leadership could be developed. Sukhe Bator died in 1923, but Choibalsan lived to become the virtual dictator of the puppet state until his death in 1952.

As for Mongolia's national unity and integration, the new revolutionary regime quickly and successfully undertook the role of counterinsurgent and crushed the separatist movements of the Oirots in western Mongolia. The Oirots revolt was completely and finally suppressed in 1923 when Ja Lama was shot by a Mongolian officer disguised as a pilgrim. On the other hand, Pan-Mongolian territorial aspirations were frustrated by the Soviets, who, like the tsarists

before them, found it expedient to recognize Chinese control over Inner Mongolian and Russian domination over the Tannu Tuva region.

An Assessment of Failure

The obvious conclusion that may be derived from the Mongolian episode of the 1919-21 period is that the various forces that might together have performed a counterinsurgent function were never able to achieve the unity of purpose and common political objectives necessary to defeat the Red Army and the small band of dedicated Mongolian revolutionaries. Indeed, there seems to have been virtually no awareness of any need for cooperation against a common foe. The Chinese might have achieved a viable administrative system in Outer Mongolia in 1920, if the White Russians had not intervened at that time. The assorted forces under Ungern-Sternberg's banner were so intent on overthrowing the Bolsheviks in Russia that they gave no thought to developing a base of popular support among the Mongols, and Ungern-Sternberg's romantic promises of Pan-Mongolism were quickly discounted by his use of indiscriminate terrorism and his mistreatment of the country's traditional elite. In short, the counterinsurgents, Chinese and White Russian as well as Mongolian, failed completely at precisely the things for which the Communist insurgents displayed singular talent. At least in the context of 1921 conditions, the Red Army and the Mongolian insurgents were in complete agreement on political and military objectives.

NOTES

Author's Note: Some manuscript materials of importance may be found at the Hoover Library, Stanford, California.

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²Gerard M. Friters, Outer Mongolia and Its International Position (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1949), pp. 11-25.

³Fedor S. Mansvetov, "Inside Outer Mongolia," Asia and the Americas (May 1945), p. 244.

⁴Knutson, Outer Mongolia, pp. 11-12.

⁵Friters, Outer Mongolia, pp. 151-162.

⁶Knutson, Outer Mongolia, p. 21.

⁷Robert A. Rupen, "The Mongolian People's Republic and Sino-Soviet Competition," Communist Strategies in Asia, ed. A. Doak Barnett (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1963), p. 281.

⁸Ts. Puntsuknorov, Mongolyn avtonomit üein tüükh, 1911-1919 (History of the Period of Mongolian Autonomy, 1911-1919) (Ulan Bator, 1955), p. 222.

⁹Kungurov and Sorokovikov, Aratskaia Revoliutsiia; istoricheskii ocherk (Irkutsk, 1957), p. 44.

¹⁰Robert A. Rupen, "Mongolian Nationalism," Royal Central Asian Journal, XLV (April 1958), pp. 157-158; (October 1958), pp. 245-268.

¹¹Knutson, Outer Mongolia, pp. 13, 39.

¹²Friters, Outer Mongolia, pp. 39-40.

¹³Rupen, "Mongolian Nationalism."

¹⁴Rupen, "The Mongolian People's Republic and Sino-Soviet Competition," p. 282.

¹⁵G. C. Binstead, "Mongolia," China Year Book, 1914 (Peking), pp. 609-643.

¹⁶Kh. Choibalsan, Kratkii ocherk mongol'skoi narodnoi revoliutsii (Moscow, 1952).

¹⁷M. S. Kolesnikov, Sukhe Bator (Moscow, 1959).

¹⁸Knutson, Outer Mongolia, p. 27.

¹⁹Friters, Outer Mongolia, pp. 120-121.

²⁰Knutson, Outer Mongolia, p. 27.

²¹Text of Party Oath (June 1920) in Choibalsan, Kratkii ocherk, pp. 21-23; text of Party Platform (March 1921) in Kallinikov, "U istokov mongol'skoi revoliutsii," Khoziaistvo Mongolii, III, No. 10 (Ulan Bator, May-June 1928), pp. 65-68. Tampered text in Choibalsan, Kratkii ocherk, pp. 41-43.

²²Allen Whiting, Soviet Policies in China, 1917-1924 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954), p. 163.

²³Kungurov and Sorokovikov, Aratskaia Revoliutsiia, pp. 200-202

- ²⁴Friters, Outer Mongolia, p. 121; Knutson, Outer Mongolia, p. 31.
- ²⁵B. D. Tsibikov, Rasgrom Ungernovshchiny (Ulan Ude, 1947), pp. 54-57.
- ²⁶George N. Roerich, Trails to Inmost Asia (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931), pp. 223-224.
- ²⁷Robert T. Pollard, China's Foreign Relations, 1917-1931 (New York: Macmillan, 1933), pp. 118-120.
- ²⁸Friters, Outer Mongolia, pp. 186-191.
- ²⁹William H. Chamberlin, The Russian Revolution, 1917-1921 (New York: Macmillan, 1954), II, p. 426.
- ³⁰H. N. Kniazev, Legendarnyi Baron (Harbin, Manchuria, 1942); George Stewart, The White Armies of Russia (New York: Macmillan Company, 1933), p. 401.
- ³¹Friters, Outer Mongolia, pp. 191-192.
- ³²Translation of Natsokdorj's Life of Sukhe Bator in Owen Lattimore, Nationalism and Revolution in Mongolia (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 155-156.
- ³³Pollard, China's Foreign Relations, pp. 162-163.
- ³⁴Friters, Outer Mongolia, p. 192.
- ³⁵Ibid., p. 230.
- ³⁶I. Genkin, "Konets Ungerna i nachalo novoi Mongolii," Severnaya Azia, No. 1 (1928), pp. 75-90.

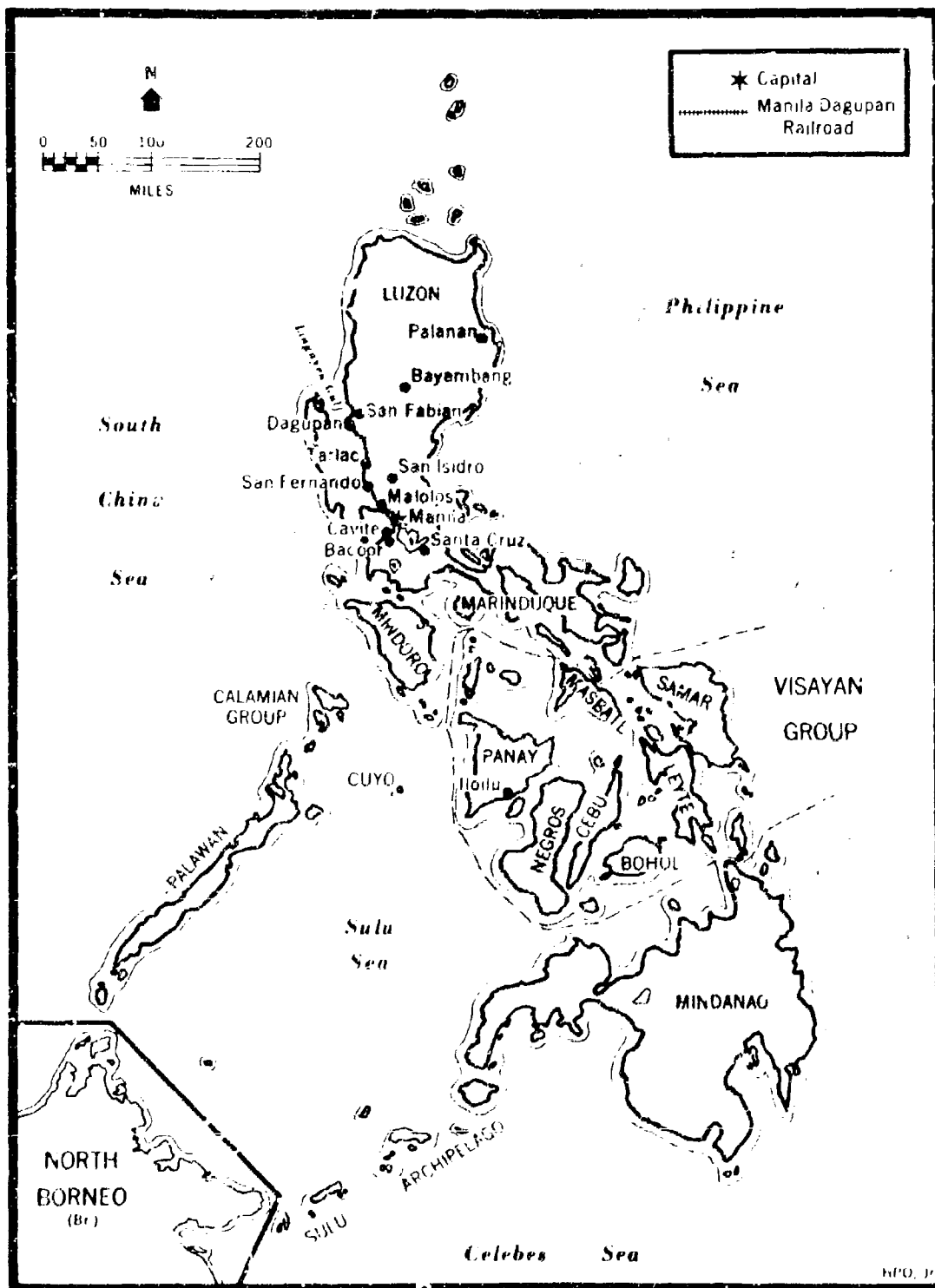
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Chapter Four

THE PHILIPPINES 1899-1902

by Howard Maxwell Merriman



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When the United States annexed the Philippines at the end of the Spanish-American War, Filipino hostility against Spanish rule was promptly transferred to the United States. Aguinaldo and his guerrillas continuing their fight for independence; after a three-year struggle, a careful balance of military force and political action brought success to U.S. forces.

BACKGROUND

The Philippine insurrection, which lasted from February 4, 1899, to approximately July 4, 1902, was an inherited one in the sense that the reasons for the initial unrest lay in the grievances Filipinos had against Spanish rule before Americans had any knowledge of, concern for, or connection with events in the Philippine Islands. As a result of the decision to annex the Islands following the Spanish-American War, the United States was faced with a hostile population intent on maintaining independence under the Philippine Republic, which had just been set up by Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo. In other words, if the United States intended to rule the Philippines, it must first conquer them.

Docile under Spanish rule for centuries, the Filipinos had, by the 1880's, become dissatisfied with the existing political administration of the Islands, from which they were virtually shut out. They had also become dissatisfied with the extensive power of the Spanish friars who, going far beyond their religious and teaching responsibilities, had become potent political figures as well as wealthy landholders in the various parishes and municipalities. By 1892 a secret society, the Katipunan, had been formed with the purpose of uniting all Filipinos and, if reforms were not forthcoming, eventually separating from Spain.

Emergence of Open Rebellion Under Aguinaldo

The underground movement of the early 1890's developed into open rebellion in August 1898, with insurgent strength lying largely in central Luzon. Emilio Aguinaldo, mayor of Cavite Viejo at the outbreak of rebellion, emerged as leader of the insurgents. Not yet 30 years old, this

remarkable man became the living symbol of the Filipino desire for independence and remained so for half a century. His strategy at this time foreshadowed his later tactics against U.S. forces: impressed by the strength of the Spaniards in the field, he decided to retreat to the north and resort to guerrilla warfare. A peace of sorts was arranged between Spaniards and Filipinos in December 1897, but it was only a truce and settled none of the basic problems.²

By early March 1898, disorders had once again broken out, not only in Luzon but also in the Visayas. It was the beginning of the Spanish-American War in April, however, that really sparked a new rebellion against the Spanish. With the Spanish involved in war with a powerful foreign enemy, it was an obvious time for the Filipinos to move, particularly after U.S. Adm. George Dewey's smashing victory on the first of May. On May 4, the insurgent leaders, who were in exile in Hong Kong, decided that Aguinaldo should return to the Islands to build up and discipline an army. From that time on, events moved rapidly. On May 19, 1898, Aguinaldo and 13 other insurgent leaders arrived in Manila on the U.S. revenue cutter McCulloch; and five days later he announced the establishment of a new regime—"until the time when these Islands, being under our complete control, may form a constitutional republican assembly and appoint a president and cabinet, into whose hands I shall then resign the command of the Islands." Before the end of the month, open warfare had broken out between the Filipinos and the Spaniards.³

Growing Coolness in U.S.-Filipino Relations

Meanwhile Dewey, in spite of his easy victory over the Spanish fleet (about which the American consul jubilantly reported, "our crews were all hoarse from cheering and while we suffer for cough drops and throat doctors we have no use for liniment or surgeons"), was powerless to move against Manila itself until he had received reinforcements. He waited from May to August. During this time the Filipinos were eager for collaboration with the Americans and apparently looked upon them as liberators who would, sooner or later, recognize their independence.⁴ The Americans grew colder and colder toward Aguinaldo, however, and moved independently against the Spaniards, taking the city of Manila in an almost bloodless conquest on August 13, 1898. That night the Americans were in command of the city and the Filipinos were in control outside the city. This uneasy situation was to continue for the next six months while both sides waited for news of U.S. President William McKinley's plans and the action of the peace negotiators in Paris.

Only one American on the scene seems to have realized what the Filipinos' grim insistence on independence might lead to and conceived a plan whereby bloodshed might be averted. This man was Oscar F. Williams, the last U.S. consul to the Spanish Philippines, who made detailed recommendations, which he sent to the Secretary of State on August 31.

He advised buying the insurgents' arms and paying the expenses incurred by them since May 1 (10 U.S. gold dollars to each of Aguinaldo's soldiers). The police force, Williams said, should be made up equally of Americans and Filipinos; 5,000 Filipinos should be enlisted in the army in mixed regiments under U.S. officers.

He also recommended inviting Aguinaldo and his leaders to visit Washington. "Let them cross great America, see her cities, farms, and factories—let them meet our President, Cabinet and Congress—to know what we are and of what they are part and parcel..." After this delegation's return, Williams suggested, Filipinos should be selected as local officers, treated liberally, but held to strict accountability. An elections system like that of the United States should also be set up, so that "home rule" might be almost complete. Pointing out that the cost of subduing the islands would be high, both in gold and men, Williams advised, "These natives are civil, kind, loyal to parents, simple in habits—but brave to temerity. Why slaughter the bread-winners of these islands when possession can be had easier, cheaper, more honorably?"

His course, Williams said, would conciliate everyone. He added feelingly, "I wish to God! could meet our good President and freely discuss this. ... To do wrong is hard! to do right is easy! the world looks on!"⁶

His advice and warning did not fall on altogether deaf ears. In Washington, an Assistant Secretary of State wrote on Williams' despatch under date of October 20, 1898: "No need of saying that copies have been sent to Peace Com'n. Just ack. by sub."⁷ But there the matter dropped. President McKinley prayed and made his famous decision to take the Philippines; in Paris the Spanish negotiators acquiesced and on December 10, 1898, signed a treaty ceding the Islands.

INSURGENCY

Rarely in the course of history has a state of insurgency been permitted to develop so openly and so extensively as in the Philippines in 1898 and early 1899. The Filipino buildup, originally directed against the Spanish with at least tacit U.S. support, was both political and military. After the U.S. received possession of the Islands, the insurgents continued to muster strength; in Manila, indeed, the Filipinos dug trench after trench outside the city under the curious eyes of the Americans. By the time the insurrection was activated against the United States, the insurgents offered formidable opposition.

Aguinaldo's Anti-Spanish Campaign

General Aguinaldo had arrived back in the Islands in May 1898. Having on the 21st of that month announced the establishment of the Dictatorship, which he promised would be temporary, he was strong enough militarily to launch the first attack against the Spaniards on the 28th. In

the next few weeks, the Filipinos took over the provinces of Cavite, Batangas, Laguna, Morong, Bulacan, Pampanga, and Bataan, effectively isolating the Spaniards in Manila. The great valley of central Luzon, stretching from Manila to the northern terminus of the Manila-Dagupan Railroad and the heartland of the most important island in the archipelago, fell into the hands of the Filipinos without serious opposition.⁸ By the end of June, the insurgents were planning military expeditions to take over the more distant provinces and islands.⁹

Aguinaldo Forms Filipino Government

While these military actions were taking place, Aguinaldo was also consolidating his political position. At ceremonies held on June 12, 1898 (which Admiral Dewey politely refused to attend) Aguinaldo proclaimed the independence of the Philippines—displaying formally for the first time the Filipino flag and, with the other leaders, signing the "Act of the Declaration of Independence."¹⁰ In his decree of June 18, Aguinaldo announced a general governmental reorganization of municipalities and provinces, a policy which was extended as his armies succeeded in liberating more and more areas from Spanish control.¹¹

On June 23, Aguinaldo changed his title to "President of the Revolutionary Government," established a revolutionary committee to act abroad, and promised that at some future time a congress, composed of representatives from the various provinces, would be called. On July 15, he announced his Cabinet nominations: War and Public Works (Baldomero Aguinaldo), Interior (Leandro Ibarro), and Treasury (Mariano Trias). On August 1, a general convention of town chiefs was held at Bacoor—the first of what turned out to be a series of Filipino capitals—and a solemn and formal declaration of the independence of the Philippine Islands was signed, copies of which were sent to foreign powers five days later.¹²

At this time, too, Aguinaldo sent a personal letter to U.S. Consul Williams, in which he wrote in part: "I have full confidence in the generosity and philanthropy which shine in characters of gold in the history of the privileged people of the United States. . . ." For this reason, Aguinaldo continued, he was "invoking the friendship which you profess for me, and the love which you have for my people," and requesting Williams to "entreat the Government at Washington to recognize the revolutionary government of the Filipinos."¹³

Between August 1898 and February 1899, Aguinaldo's position was considerably strengthened. When Manila was taken on August 13, Maj. Gen. Wesley Merritt, who received the surrender of the city, estimated that Aguinaldo had "some 12,000 men under arms, with plenty of ammunition, and a number of field pieces."¹⁴ U.S. forces were now confined to Manila and Cavite and were stopped from acquiring further territory by the truce with Spain. From the armistice in August 1898, until the exchange of ratifications of the peace treaty in April 1899, Spain retained legal responsibility in all other parts of the Philippines.¹⁵ With Spain helpless and the hands of the U.S. authorities tied, the Filipinos went on consolidating their position. By

early fall a Filipino propaganda apparatus was in full operation, seeking to "exalt militant nationalism, to infuse absolute adherence to the Filipino Government and undivided loyalty to Aguinaldo, and to indoctrinate the masses with a belief that the Philippine Republic alone could best secure for the Filipinos peace and happiness."¹⁶ To this end Aguinaldo's government not only encouraged the publication of two daily newspapers by private individuals, but also issued, from September 1898 to mid-1899, an official biweekly under a succession of names: El Heraldo de la Revolución, Heraldo Filipino, Índice Oficial, and Gaceta de Filipinas. Propaganda was carried on abroad as well as at home, with one special agent dispatched to the United States and France, and another to Japan.¹⁷ Apparently Aguinaldo directly solicited foreign aid from only one government, Japan, and was turned down.¹⁸

The long-promised revolutionary congress was convoked at Malolos on September 15, 1898, and, after a certain amount of factional debate, a constitution was adopted. On January 21, 1899, Aguinaldo declared the constitution in effect, and the Philippine Republic came into being.

Early Strength of Aguinaldo's Government and Forces

The Republic began its career at the height of its power and would never be so strong again. Its territory stretched, roughly speaking, from northern Luzon to northern Mindanao and included all the islands between, with the exception of the greater part of Palawan and western Negros.¹⁹ Aguinaldo at this time had an estimated 35,000 to 45,000 men under his command, ragged perhaps and undisciplined certainly, but armed with Mausers captured from the Spaniards and other rifles bought in Hong Kong, using smokeless ammunition.²⁰ Furthermore, his government and army had the sympathy and support of the majority of the population. Above all, it had a single purpose--independence.

The United States at first vastly underestimated the strength of the Filipino will. Even the recapitulation given by the U. S. Secretary of War in his annual report for 1899 seems inadequate: "Aguinaldo exercised a military dictatorship, and with a so-called cabinet imitated the forms of civil government, having his headquarters at Tarlac, which he called his capital. . . ." It would take three years, 10,000 American casualties, and \$600 million in gold before the Filipinos were subdued.²¹

COUNTERINSURGENCY

The insurrection against the Americans broke out at about 8:30 p.m. on February 4, 1899. "The thing is on," remarked the Provost Marshal of Manila to Maj. Gen. Elwell S. Otis, who had taken over command of the American forces the preceding August. The fighting in this first engagement lasted almost 24 hours and took place around virtually the entire city of Manila, for the insurgents had the Americans nearly hemmed in. By 5 p.m. on the 5th, the lines of the

Filipinos had been pierced. American casualties were about 250 killed and wounded. "Those of the insurgents will never be known," General Otis is reported as saying. "We buried 700 of them."²²

Hopes for U.S.-Filipino Reconciliation Fade

The chances for quickly ending the insurrection appeared, at first glance, to be bright. At this time the troops composing the U.S. 8th Army Corps under General Otis included 171 officers and over 5,000 enlisted men of the Regular Army, and 667 officers and almost 1,000 enlisted men of the volunteers.²³ However, the effective fighting force was actually around 14,000, of whom 3,000 were in the provost guard in the large and hostile city of Manila.²⁴ Furthermore, all of the volunteers and 1,650 of the regulars would become entitled to discharge upon final ratification of the Treaty of Paris, an event which would take place on April 11, 1899.²⁵

In Washington, on February 6, two days after the beginning of the insurrection, the Senate in a very close vote had approved the treaty, thereby dashing any lingering Filipino hope that the United States would not annex the islands. At about the same time, the U.S. Senate also killed the last opportunity to make peace with the Filipinos by voting down the Bacon resolution. Sen. Augustus O. Bacon of Georgia had proposed an amendment to the treaty by which the United States would have disclaimed any plans of exercising permanent sovereignty or jurisdiction over the Philippines; the amendment would also have asserted the determination of the U.S. Government to "leave the government and control of the islands to their people" as soon as a stable and independent Filipino government was established.²⁶ The vote on the Bacon amendment was 29 to 29, and the Vice President of the United States, Garret Hobart, cast the deciding vote against it.²⁷ The insurgents henceforth had the feeling that they could expect nothing from the United States and that they must fight it out to the bitter end.

U.S. Forces at Initial Disadvantage

At the outset of the insurrection, then, the Filipinos were at the peak of their strength, while U.S. forces were at their lowest point. In addition, the selection of General Otis as commander appears to have been somewhat less than inspired. A graduate of the Harvard Law School class of 1861 and with a good Civil War record, Otis was over 60 years old when he started his tour of duty in the Philippines. It is perhaps too harsh to say, as a contemporary critic did, that he was "of about the right mental caliber to command a one-company post in Arizona," but it is only fair to point out that, from the time of his arrival in August 1898, he never once realized the probability of conflict if the United States decided to take the Philippines. During the 20 months that he was in charge, his general method of operation was to hug his desk in Manila, where he indulged "a most absorbing passion for the details of administrative work" and interfered constantly with his commanders in the field.²⁸

The Railroad Campaign

The U.S. campaign in the spring of 1899, in spite of a string of victories, achieved little of permanent value. The logical objective was to capture the only rail line in the Islands—the Manila-Dagupan Railroad, stretching some 120 miles northward across Luzon. The town of Caloocan, located on this railway several miles north of Manila and held by 4,000 Filipinos under Lieutenant General Luna, second in command to Aguinaldo, was captured, on February 10, by Gen. Arthur MacArthur, commanding the 2d Division of the 8th Army Corps. He did not advance from Caloocan up the railroad until late March; he then captured Malolos, the new insurgent capital some 20 miles away, and halted there for some time. U.S. battle casualties had by this time reached 1,020, and, an ominous indication of the perils of campaigning in the Philippines, 15 percent of the command was on sick report.²⁹

Almost a month later, MacArthur continued his advance northward. On April 28, he took Calumpit, where the railway crossed the Rio Grande, and shortly afterward entered San Fernando, the new insurgent capital. He was now only 40 miles up the rail line from Manila.³⁰ And the rainy season would commence in June.

Meanwhile, Maj. Gen. Henry W. Lawton had arrived in the Philippines by way of the Suez Canal, bringing with him not only his staff but welcome reinforcements—the 4th and 17th Infantry. Until his death in action on December 18, 1899, he was "one man whose name was enough to alarm the Filipino Insurgents."³¹ In April, he commanded an expedition into Laguna Province and captured first the important town of Santa Cruz, then Pagsanjan, then Longos, and finally set up camp at Paete. But General Otis ordered the expedition back to Manila a few days later, and all of these towns were reoccupied by the insurgents.³²

During May, General Lawton engaged the Filipinos to the east of the railroad, eventually taking San Isidro, which he made his headquarters for the time being. General MacArthur set up his headquarters at San Fernando.³³ Except for an abortive campaign south of the city of Manila and the occupation of the cities of Iloilo and Cebu and the island of Negros, that was where matters rested until fall: the Americans had protected Manila and held the railroad as far north as they had fought their way.³⁴

Bates Agreement Placates Moros

It should be pointed out that General Otis had made a significant contribution to limiting the extent of the insurrection by sending Brig. Gen. John C. Bates in July to negotiate with the Sultan of Sulu. On August 20, 1899, the Bates Agreement, sometimes called the American-Sulu Treaty, was signed. The sovereignty of the United States was recognized, and the Moros were permitted to retain their own customs, including polygamy and slavery. At least the Moros were kept quiet for the period of the Filipino insurrection, although they also would have to be dealt with later.³⁵

Some Tactical and Logistical Problems

Although the results of the initial campaign were meager, the lessons learned by the Americans were many and painful. It was now clear that campaigning in the Philippines involved special problems that required special answers. Nothing could be done about the climate, but something had to be done to protect the soldiers from the ills it caused, particularly dysentery and fever. Rain and mud, roads that shook ordinary wagons to pieces, sizable rivers inadequately bridged, and the painful slowness of the native carabao carts were all to be dealt with.³⁶

The problem of an army large enough to handle the grossly under-estimated enemy was on the way to being solved by the summer of 1899. On March 2, 1899, Congress passed an act authorizing the increase of Army strength to 65,000 enlisted Regulars and the raising of a force of not more than 35,000 volunteers, to be recruited from the country at large. The volunteer army was to be made up of 24 regiments of infantry and 1 of cavalry. The infantry regiments were numbered 26 through 49, the numbering of the regular infantry regiments then ending at 25. In the 48th and 49th regiments the enlisted men and most of the line officers were colored. The Secretary of War pointed out that the volunteer forces were needed immediately in the field, and rapid organization and training were therefore necessary. Under the terms of the act, the volunteer army was to continue in service not later than July 1, 1901. At last the United States was taking a more realistic view of the situation, by recognizing the possibility that the insurrection might last 2 years.³⁷

The U.S. Navy, throughout 1899, smoothly carried out the transportation of the newly authorized troops to the Philippines. In addition to carrying men, it also fitted out a large number of special transports to carry horses and mules. By the end of the year, 2,238 horses and 1,075 mules had, according to the Secretary of War, been safely landed in Manila "in good condition and fit for use." Another 2,180 horses and 1,373 mules were on the way. The need to substitute horses and mules for the native carabaos led directly to another problem of supply, since the large number of animals made great quantities of forage necessary. Hay and grain had to be bought on the northern Pacific coast and shipped to Manila.³⁸

The Fall Campaign—A Limited Success

The fall 1899 campaign of the Americans moved swiftly and decisively. There were two objectives: to break the backbone of the insurgent army and scatter it; and, particularly, to capture General Aguinaldo, the heart and soul of the independence cause. To attain these objectives, a three-pronged offensive was planned: (1) General Lawton would proceed up the Rio Grande and along the northeastern borders of the plain, and swing westward toward the Gulf of Lingayen, of which Dagupan was the chief port and northern terminus of the railway; (2) Gen. Lloyd Wheaton and his troops would be transported by the Navy to the Gulf of Lingayen; (3) General MacArthur would proceed up the railroad and capture Tarlac, the

current insurgent capital, and then proceed northward to the end of the railway at Dagupan.³⁹

This plan was brilliantly executed between October 12 and November 20, 1899. General Lawton, commanding the 3d Cavalry and 22d Infantry, along with several hundred scouts, including a number of native Maccabebes, whose knowledge of the terrain and fierce hatred of the Tagalogs made them particularly valuable, moved up the Rio Grande on October 12. On the 20th, San Isidro, which had been evacuated by the Americans in May, was once again taken. From there Lawton moved rapidly north. On November 13 he turned west according to plan, and by the 18th his forces were within a few miles of the Gulf of Lingayen.

Meanwhile, on November 6, General Wheaton set out with 2,500 men of the 13th Regular Infantry and 33d Volunteer Infantry and a platoon of the 6th Artillery. The Navy put them ashore the following day at San Fabian, covering the landing with its guns.

On November 5, General MacArthur moved northward along the railroad; his command included the 9th, 17th, and 36th Infantry Regiments, two troops of the 4th Cavalry, two platoons of the 1st Artillery, and a detachment of scouts. Sweeping the insurgents before him, he entered Tarlac on the 12th. By November 20, MacArthur and Wheaton had effected a junction at Dagupan, and the three-pronged plan had been successfully carried out.⁴⁰

Aguinaldo, however, had not been captured and he had no intention of surrendering. At a council of war at Bayambang in late November, the insurgent leaders accepted the fact that their forces were no longer capable of further resistance in the field, and decided to disband the army. From this time forward they would resort to guerrilla warfare.

General Otis, at his desk in Manila, was lulled into thinking the insurrection was virtually at an end. But although it had taken only 10 months to disperse the insurgent army, it was to take 30 more months to pacify the Philippine Islands.⁴¹

Beginning of Civil Pacification: The Schurman Commission

While the military campaigns of 1899 were going on, the United States had also begun civil measures of pacification. Early in January, Admiral Dewey, alarmed at the dangers in the situation, asked President McKinley to send a "small civilian commission composed of men skilled in diplomacy and statesmanship." McKinley responded at once by appointing a commission of five, headed by President Jacob Gould Schurman of Cornell, and including Dewey and Otis. Secretary of War Elihu Root drafted the instructions, stating that the commissioners should study "the existing social and political state of the various populations" giving particular attention to local government, administration of justice, and tax policies, and "the legislative needs of the various groups of inhabitants." The commissioners were to report on "the measures which should be instituted for the maintenance of order, peace, and the public welfare, either as temporary steps to be taken immediately . . . or as suggestions for future legislation."⁴²

Then train the Red Ants on him, like some
caged Bubonic Rat.
Thank God, I've got no brother who would
ever stoop to that! . . .⁴⁸

Savagery and atrocities were by no means confined to the insurgents. As the insurrection went on and U.S. soldiers caught on to the fundamental fact that there were no Marquis of Queensberry rules in this kind of warfare, they retaliated with a vengeance and adopted or devised some ingenious methods of forcing information about enemy movements or gun emplacements. The "water cure" was one of these methods. It "consisted in placing a bamboo reed in the victim's mouth and pouring water [some accounts specified salt or dirty water] down his throat thus painfully distending his stomach and crowding all his viscera." The subject, allowed to void this, would, under threat of repetition, usually give the desired information.⁴⁹

Other devices were used at times with apparently varying degrees of success. The "rope cure" consisted in wrapping a rope around the victim's neck and torso "two or three times until it formed a sort of a girdle. A stick [or rifle] was then placed between the ropes and twisted until a combination of smothering and garroting was created." Sometimes, what is described as "a good beating up" was administered. The 9th Cavalry apparently had a method all its own, more psychological than physical: the Filipino "was taken into a semi-dark room and securely bound. Then a huge black, dressed only in a loincloth and carrying a cavalry saber, entered and danced around, threatening with the saber. Presumably he looked like the devil incarnate."⁵⁰

A number of officers and enlisted men accused of torture and undue cruelty were tried by courts-martial. The sentences appear, however, to have been remarkably lenient. For instance, of ten officers tried on such charges, three were acquitted and seven convicted of "looting, torture, and murder." Of these last seven, five were given reprimands, one a reprimand and a fine of \$300, and one was sentenced to a loss of 35 places in the army list and forfeiture of one-half pay for nine months.⁵¹ When the whole conduct of the war was investigated by the Senate in 1902, however, the use of torture was condemned.⁵²

U.S. Extends Area Control

During 1900, U.S. forces extended their military control, not only over the all-important island of Luzon, but also over the islands to the south. A campaign by General Bates and General Wheaton in January and February was successful in adding much of southern Luzon to the U.S. orbit. In March, the island of Bohol was peaceably occupied. By May, U.S. troops were in control of Marinduque and Masbate, Calamianes, the Cuyos group, and Palawan. As the territories were occupied, they were organized so that the Division of the Philippines eventually covered all the territory ceded by the Treaty of Paris. The Division was divided into the four departments of Northern Luzon, Southern Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao and Jolo (Sulu). As necessary, departments were divided into military districts. On the municipal level, General

Lawton had set the pattern as far back as May 1899 when he issued his famous "General Field Order No. 8, Baliuag," under which the citizens of Baliuag were authorized to meet and elect a mayor.⁵³

The Taft Commission Assumes Civil Control

The military activities of 1900, important as they undoubtedly were, formed only part of the counterinsurgency program. Early in the year, President McKinley named William Howard Taft to head the Second Philippine Commission. This one, unlike the first, was entirely civilian in composition. Besides Taft, appointees included Dean C. Worcester, a zoology professor from the University of Michigan and a member of the Schurman Commission of the year before; Luke E. Wright, a judge from Tennessee; Bernard Moses, a history professor from the University of California; and Henry C. Ide, a lawyer from Vermont. Once again, Secretary of War Elihu Root drafted instructions, this time authorizing that all legislative power be transferred on September 1 from the military to the commission.⁵⁴

Taft, looking mammoth in a white suit, arrived in Manila on the morning of June 3, 1900. He was greeted by General MacArthur, who less than a month before had succeeded General Otis as military governor. Of his welcome, Taft later wrote: "The populace that we expected to welcome us was not there, and I cannot describe the coldness of the army officers and army men who received us any better than by saying that it somewhat exceeded the coldness of the populace." In a letter home, he wrote that the frigidity made him stop perspiring, but, "we must be patient and amiable in this climate." And patience and amiability would indeed have to be Taft's chief characteristics for the next few years in the Philippines. Relations between the Army and the commission did, however, ease somewhat when, as Taft wrote later, "it dawned upon most of them that we held the purse-string."⁵⁵

According to plan, the Taft Commission assumed legislative power and, in its first year, passed 449 acts dealing with political, administrative, social, and economic matters. Among the more important of these were an appropriation of \$2 million (Mexican) for the construction and repair of highways and bridges, an appropriation of \$5,000 (Mexican) for a preliminary survey of a proposed extension of the Manila-Dagupan Railroad into the mountains to the north, an act to raise the salaries of Filipino public school teachers in Manila, an act reorganizing the Forestry Bureau and the Mining Bureau, an appropriation of \$1 million for improving the port of Manila, an act regulating the sale of intoxicating liquors within the city of Manila, an act for the establishment of a civil service, an act authorizing the establishment of local police forces in cities and towns and an appropriation of \$150,000 for their maintenance, an act to permit civil marriage and the authorization of the beginning of a study on tariff reform.⁵⁶

Filipino Support for Taft

By the beginning of 1901, the American civilian government was functioning fairly smoothly. In July, Taft became the first civil governor of the Philippines. He was helped in that position by the fact that he had a cooperative Filipino party to work with. At the end of 1900, a group of Filipinos had issued a manifesto for the formation of the Federal Party with a general platform advocating immediate acceptance of the sovereignty of the United States. Taft was happy to encourage this friendly group, which gradually extended its influence through the provinces, and rewarded the leaders with positions in the civil government.⁵⁷ It must not be imagined, however, that Taft and the Federalists had everything their own way; almost immediately there was formed a rival party, the Nationalists, who were uncompromisingly for independence.⁵⁸ Nonetheless, the Federal Party eased Taft's burden.

U.S. Situation in 1901

American military strength was at its peak in 1901. There was a U.S. Army of 2,367 officers and 71,727 enlisted men.⁵⁹ Yet the guerrilla warfare, which had now been carried on for over a year, showed no signs of abating. Brig. Gen. (then Col.) Frederick Funston later said of the situation in February 1901: "Through the country everywhere were the enemy's guerrilla bands, made up not only of the survivors of the forces that had fought us earlier in the war, but of men who had been recruited or conscripted since." In spite of constant action on the part of the U.S. Army, it only occasionally managed to inflict any punishment on the insurgents. Even its few successes had little general effect. Aguinaldo, in hiding, still controlled the guerrilla bands through the local chiefs. He was recognized, according to Funston, as "the head and front of the insurrection," and Funston felt that "the thing could not end until he was either out of the way or a prisoner in our hands."⁶⁰

Capture of Aguinaldo

The capture of Aguinaldo was certainly the biggest event of 1901, if not of the entire insurrection. Colonel Funston began his spectacular plans in early February, when the leader of a small band of defecting insurgents turned out to be bearing dispatches from Aguinaldo to subordinates in central and southern Luzon. Funston and a native associate sat up all night and broke the code in which the more important dispatches were written—no mean feat since it involved rendering the cipher through two languages, Spanish and Tagalog, into a third, English. The stratagem devised to capture Aguinaldo, who was known to be in the isolated village of Pulanan near the northern end of Luzon, was a daring one. Native Maccabebe scouts were to be disguised as rebels coming to join Aguinaldo, bearing bogus letters and shepherding a handful of American prisoners. Hilario Tal Placido was to lead the "rebels"; and the "prisoners," including Funston, were to be dressed as privates. The plan was

approved by the military commander, although Funston later reported that, when he paid his last call on General Wheaton, that officer said "Funston, this is a desperate undertaking. I fear that I shall never see you again."

The Vicksburg carried the 59-man expedition north and, early in the morning of March 14, 1901, landed them from the ship's boats. The trek to Palanan proved to be a nightmare, with the rain pouring unceasingly, more than 60 streams to be waded through, and the men ravenous from hunger. The climax came when Hilario Tal Placido, a fat man, grabbed Aguinaldo, who weighed all of one hundred and fifteen pounds, and sat on him until reinforcements could come up. The date was March 23, nine days after the expedition had landed on the coast.⁶¹

End of the Insurgency

General Aguinaldo was taken to Manila where, after long indecision and inner turmoil, he finally signed a statement ending the war and pledged his loyalty to the United States. He retired from public life and waited out the next 45 years in his house near Manila. When, on July 4, 1946, the United States granted the Philippines its independence, General Aguinaldo marched down Manila's Dewey Boulevard and, with great ceremony, removed the black tie that he had worn as a symbol of mourning.⁶²

After Aguinaldo's capitulation, the insurrection degenerated into ladronism, or brigandage, although it was not until the spring of 1902 that the last important insurgent leaders, Malvar on Luzon and Lukban on Samar, surrendered.⁶³

By this time, the U.S. forces in the Islands had been cut down considerably. Since under the terms of the Act of March 2, 1899, the volunteer army was to continue in service not later than July 1, 1901, these regiments already had been returned to the mainland and mustered out in San Francisco. By September 1901, only the 1,111 officers and 42,128 enlisted men of the Regular Army were left in the Philippines to carry out mopping-up activities.⁶⁴

On July 4, 1902, an order of Secretary of War Root ended what remained of the military government, and on the same day President Theodore Roosevelt issued a proclamation of peace and amnesty. The insurrection was officially over.⁶⁵

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

Long before the end of the insurrection, American civil government had been firmly established in the Philippines. The Second Philippine Commission had arrived in June 1900, and had taken over legislative and administrative responsibilities in September. The Organic Act, signed by President Roosevelt on July 2, 1902, made the Philippines an unincorporated territory of the United States: all persons who were Spanish subjects on April 11, 1899, were recognized as citizens of the Philippine Islands unless they wished to retain their Spanish citizenship. The

Commission was continued by this act, and would, for the time being, consist of the members of the original Taft Commission plus three Filipino members. In 1907 an elected legislative assembly was added to the political setup.

Post-Conflict Problems

The social and economic conditions under which the civil government operated were, of course, chaotic. The Secretary of War, in his annual report for 1902, summarized the general situation in the Philippines as that of "a country just emerging from nearly six years of devastating warfare (1896-1902), during which productive industry was interrupted, vast amounts of property were destroyed, the bonds of social order were broken, habits of peaceful industry were lost, and at the close of which a great residuum of disorderly men were left leading a life of brigandage and robbery."⁶⁶

In addition, natural calamities had visited the Islands, and these added misfortunes were indeed serious in 1902. The rinderpest destroyed about 90 percent of all the carabaos, leaving the Filipinos without draft animals to till their land. The price of carabaos thereupon went up from \$20 to \$200 (Mexican). Another disease was killing horses, further complicating the problem. The rice crop was only 25 percent of the usual yield, and even this small crop was further diminished in Luzon and the Visayas by a plague of locusts. As a result, the Commission had to use insular funds to buy over 40 million pounds of rice abroad to stave off famine. Cholera raged through the Islands. And finally, the decline in the price of silver devalued Mexican dollars, bearing heavily on commercial interests and wage earners.⁶⁷

These were mostly temporary ills which would be cured in time. Two basic problems would not be settled for years to come: the continuing desire of the Filipinos for complete independence, which would not be achieved until 1946; and the inequitable distribution of land, which would eventually contribute to the outbreak of another Philippine insurrection—this time by the Hukbalahap and directed against the independent Philippine Republic.*

Recapitulation and Summation

The major lesson of this particular episode in counterinsurgency appears to be the necessity of a balanced combination of strong military force and wise political measures. This combination was handled in a particularly effective fashion from 1899 to 1902 in the Philippines. The chronology of events indicates the neat dovetailing of military and political actions: the mass of military men and materiel that swept the insurgent forces from the conventional field and into guerrilla warfare by late November was paralleled on the political side by the Schurman Commission which arrived in March 1899. This, in turn, prepared the way for the arrival, in

*See Chapter 17, "The Philippines (1946-1954)."

June 1900, of the Taft Commission. By 1900, the United States was carrying out military and political moves simultaneously— all-out warfare against the guerrillas, and, beginning in September, an enormous amount of legislation on political, administrative, social, and economic matters.

The capture of Aguinaldo in March 1901—which might be considered the military highlight of the war—removed the symbolic focus of the insurrection. Having gained the psychological initiative, the United States swiftly followed with McKinley's order in June for the inauguration of Governor Taft on July 4, 1901. This replacement of military control by civilian government was accompanied by military mopping-up activities, and by July 4, 1902, President Roosevelt could issue a proclamation of peace and amnesty.

It should be noted that the legislative program, which provided a comparatively easy transition into the new era, would not have been nearly so effective had it not been for the presence of a friendly, cooperative segment of the population after December 1900. One final point might be made about U.S. political moves. On September 1, 1901, three Filipinos were added to the governing civilian commission. The success of the United States in this episode of internal conflict thus appears to have been due to and consolidated by a judicious combination of military force and political wisdom.

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Part Two
COUNTERINSURGENCY
DURING WORLD WAR II

BURMA (1942-1945)

CHINA (1937-1945)

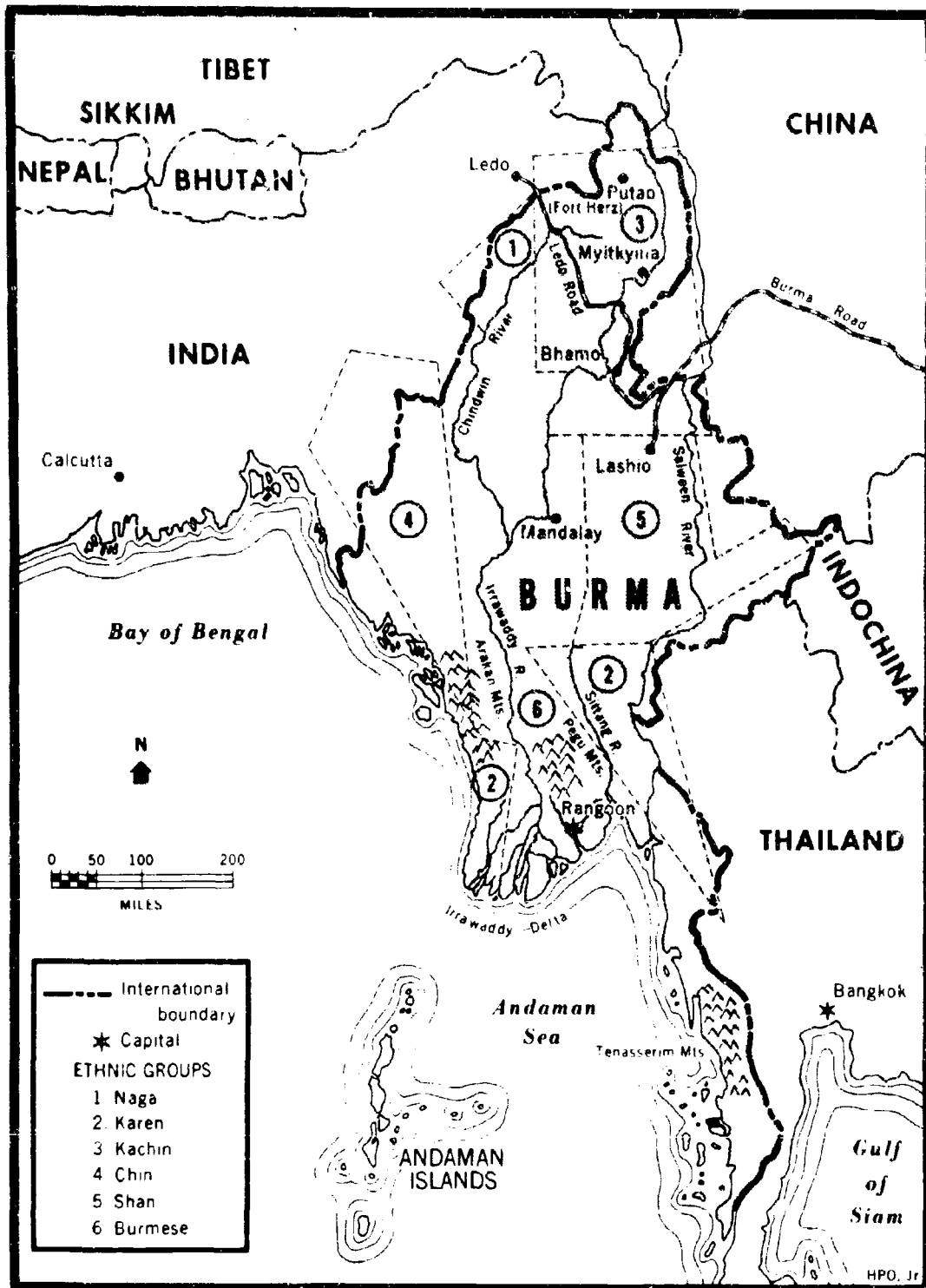
MALAYA (1942-1945)

THE PHILIPPINES (1942-1945)

Chapter Five

**BURMA
1942-1945**

by William C. Johnstone



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Japanese occupation forces in Burma were faced with an array of insurgencies among the Allied-supported hill tribes, particularly the Karens and Kachins, and, much later, the Burmese majority. However, through a combination of propaganda, political maneuver, and terrorism, as well as conventional military operations, the Japanese were able to hold on in Burma until defeated by Allied arms.

BACKGROUND¹

In 1942, when Japanese forces invaded and occupied Burma in the course of World War II, the country was truly an underdeveloped area. Only slightly smaller than Texas, larger than France, and nearly double the size of Japan, Burma had a population of about 18 million. Situated on the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal, Burma shares land borders with Thailand and Laos on the east, with China on the northeast and north, and with India and Pakistan on the west. The country is shaped roughly like a diamond kite, some 500 miles across and 800 to 1,000 miles from north to south, with the long narrow Tenasserim coastal strip extending like the kite's tail to the south for 500 miles along the Malay Peninsula bordering Thailand.

The Tibetan mountain ranges, forming the land barriers on the west, north, and northeast, carry through to a series of lesser ranges and hills within the country. The Arakan Yoma (mountains) separate the coastal strip from the rest of the country. The Pegu Yoma divide the lower central plain, while the highland plateau of the Shan hills sets the east-central region apart and extends beyond the Salween River to the Thai border. The main north-south river valleys of the Chindwin, the Irrawaddy, and the Sittang provide the agricultural base for the bulk of the Burmese-speaking population, the middle "dry zone" and the lower delta "wet zone" being the chief rice-producing areas.

Communications follow the main river valleys, the Irrawaddy being navigable as far north as Bhamo, close to the China border. The road and rail network in 1942 was not extensive and was developed from north to south. There were no roads connecting Burma to neighboring countries on the east and west; the Burma Road to China was the only significant land route out

of Burma before World War II. Thus, Burma was isolated, a kind of backwater annexed by Britain in the course of three wars in the 19th century, but never a bone of contention among the great powers. Lack of an east-west road or rail system, plus the geographic isolation of the Arakan coast, made both the British retreat from Burma in 1942 and their reoccupation in 1945 hazardous undertakings.

Lowland Burma and the mountain ranges along its western and northern borders are subject to heavy annual monsoon rains preceded by a hot, humid, dry season in April and May. The heavy downpours of the summer months and the dense jungle growth on the steep mountainsides make movement of men and animals difficult, while movement of motor transport and airplanes becomes hazardous. Except in the more temperate Shan highlands, the climate is responsible for a high incidence of malaria and respiratory diseases. In the "walkout" of refugees from the Japanese invasion in 1942, thousands perished from disease and infections caused by leeches in the jungle-clad mountains.

Burma's Peoples

Of the total population of some 18 million in 1940, over 3.5 million (almost 20 percent) consisted of non-Burmese-speaking peoples living mostly in mountainous areas surrounding the main river valleys. In culture, these minority groups ranged all the way from primitive Naga headhunters to the civilized Karens of lower Burma. Historically, most of these hill peoples had resisted Burmese control, many times with success. During the British period, the hill areas had been administered separately from Burma proper, and the mountain tribal groups had largely maintained their individual identities, customs, languages, and traditions. They looked to the British Government for protection and were a natural source for recruitment of anti-Japanese forces during the war.

Over one million Karens constituted the largest single minority group. More than half of the Karens maintained their tribal structure intact in the mountain area east of the Sittang River and south along the Tenasserim coast. Almost half a million, however, had filtered into lower Burma, mixing with the Burmese population but maintaining their separate language and customs. Over a third of them embraced Christianity during the period of British rule. As a minority group, the Karens showed initiative in obtaining education and in all kinds of employment, but frequently suffered at the hands of the Burmese majority. Looking to the return of the British for protection of their rights, the Karens proved generally loyal to the British and violently antagonistic to both Burmese and Japanese during the war.

In the far north between India and China lived some 200,000 Kachins, a primitive tribal people, fiercely independent. They were governed lightly by the British and quite a few became Christians. Although Japanese penetrated only the southern part of Kachin territory, these people proved the most willing to join in guerrilla and other activity against them.

The Chins, a minority group similar to the Kachins, lived in the mountainous area west of the Irrawaddy and south toward the Arakan ranges. They were largely free of Japanese occupation but were willing recruits to special forces raised by the British.

The Shan peoples of the eastern highlands, ethnically and linguistically related to the Thais, numbered about one million. They had resisted Burmese domination with considerable success. Administered separately by the British, they lived in a feudal system, governed by hereditary rulers called sawbwas. Because eastern Burma was not a strategic theater of war, the Shans were more or less left to their own devices. They accommodated themselves to Japanese occupation and exhibited little loyalty to anyone but themselves.

Burma Under British Rule

The Burmese majority of 14.5 million was initially unsympathetic to the British who had been driven out by the Japanese. The British-Indian Government had annexed Burma piecemeal in the 19th century and had subsequently added it as a province to their Indian Empire. Thousands of British-trained Indians were brought to Burma and came to occupy positions of some responsibility in the government. Indians also worked for foreign business firms as well as engaging in business on their own, particularly as moneylenders. As a result, the Indian community, numbering almost a million before the war, controlled a large part of the rice production, milling, and sales. As a major surplus rice producer, Burma provided some 3,000,000 tons annually, much of which went to India. The world economic depression of the 1930's completed a trend toward making the Burmese cultivator a landless tenant under absentee ownership which was largely Indian.

As a consequence of British rule, almost the whole of Burma's government and commerce, as well as the civil service, was in foreign hands—British, European, Indian, or Chinese. Burma was made a separate colony of Britain with limited self-government only in the mid-1930's and the Burmese had little time to gain experience in running their own affairs before World War II. With little stake in the future of their country and without any significant role in its development, Burmese nationalists were generally ready to believe the propaganda that the Japanese came as "liberators."

After the mid-1930's, in fact, the Burmese nationalist movement had been increasingly dominated by a young and vociferous group of Burmese calling themselves the "Thakins." They used Marxism as a doctrinal justification for their demands for independence, although few of them could be called knowledgeable, dedicated Communists. From this group, a young man named Aung San was chosen by the Japanese and, with some "thirty comrades," was taken to Japan in the early 1940's for training. These men eventually formed the nucleus of the Burma Independence Army, which entered Burma with the Japanese in 1942. Other Burmese political leaders, such as Dr. Ba Maw, U Nu, and the Thakin Than

Tun, stayed in Burma; but all of them were willing to welcome the Japanese "liberators" of their country.

INSURGENCY

The insurgency in Burma between 1942 and 1945, which took the form of rebellion against Japanese occupation, was, not surprisingly, initially supported only by the non-Burmese elements of the population, particularly the Karens and the Kachins. Burmese nationalists joined the resistance only later, after general disenchantment with Japanese promises of independence and after British success in driving out the Japanese appeared certain. The various insurgent groups—Kachins, Karens, and Burmese—had no connection with each other, mainly because of the geography of the country as it affected war operations. The motives of each insurgent group were different, and it is therefore necessary to deal with the principal insurgent groups separately.

The British Organize First Kachin Guerrillas

Chronologically, insurgency against the Japanese occupation of Burma began in the mountainous region inhabited mainly by the Kachins. Putao (Fort Herz) was the administrative headquarters of this area and a small number of British officials had remained here at the time of general British withdrawal from Burma. Except for difficult mountain trails, the only contact was by air. In the spring of 1942, an additional number of officers of the British Army and representatives of the Government of Burma, in exile at Simla in India, were airdropped into Kachin territory. British civil administration of sorts was carried on, while the British military organized the Kachins into an intelligence network and a nucleus for protection of the small airstrip that was built at Putao. British forces consisted of approximately 100 officers and some 300 enlisted men, controlling over 1,000 Kachin guerrillas. Mainly used for intelligence gathering, the Kachins also helped in the rescue of downed Allied fliers on the Hump route to China which, with the assistance of American personnel, also became a primary operation.

American Forces Enter Kachin Territory

In April 1942, the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS) activated Detachment 101,² and the advance group of a few officers and enlisted men was airdropped into Putao. Its objectives were to organize air rescue work, develop an extensive intelligence network behind Japanese lines, and gradually train and arm guerrilla units which could be used in conjunction with the advance of the combined American and Chinese forces into Burma along the Ledo Road. Construction of this road from bases in India was designed to link it with the old Burma Road and thus open a land supply line to the China Theater. To accomplish this, the combined

American-Chinese forces under General Stillwell crossed back into Burma and slowly drove down the Hukawng Valley, with the capture of Myitkyina and its complex of airfields and communications as their objective.

Detachment 101 officers, originally commanded by Col. Carl Eifler and later by Col. William R. Peers, were fortunate in enlisting the aid of two Catholic priests who had ministered to the Kachins before the war and were highly trusted by them. From an initial force of about 100 Kachin irregulars, the total number enlisted for various duties—intelligence, guerrilla operations, and raiding parties behind Japanese lines—reached 10,000. American strength of Detachment 101 was at first 9 officers and 12 enlisted men; by the end of the war, there were 131 American officers and 558 enlisted men.

The American effort was directed chiefly at using the Kachins in a large-scale intelligence network. While this was being organized, groups of Kachins were also trained in the use of small arms and mortars and later organized into small guerrilla groups. These Kachin guerrillas, usually in groups of less than platoon strength and never more than the size of an American battalion, harried Japanese communications, raided supply dumps, engaged in fire fights with Japanese patrols, provided flanking protection for the main forces and fire fights, and generally disrupted the efforts of the Japanese to mobilize sizeable forces to stop the advance of regular American-Chinese units.

Because of the nature of the operations required of the Kachins, casualties were low. Officially, 184 were killed and some 86 were missing over the period of operations which ended in June 1945 when the Kachin units, along with Detachment 101, were deactivated. By this time, the war had moved out of the mountains and the British Army had broken into the Irrawaddy plains area in their drive to Rangoon.

Without outside support, Kachin insurgency against the Japanese would have amounted to little. Organized by both American and British officers, supplied with modern weapons and food, the Kachin guerrillas contributed substantial assistance to the American-Chinese advance into northern Burma. The Kachins had the advantage of operating in their home territory and turned this to the advantage also of the advancing forces by aiding outflanking movements. Also, the Allied rear bases around Putao and the mobile bases which advanced with the construction of the Ledo Road, gave sanctuary and support to the Kachin forces.

When the war moved on, the Kachins returned to their homes, experienced in modern warfare and no more tolerant of Burmese or other domination than they had been previously. After independence, their territory became one of the states in the Union of Burma and political organizations began to spring up. The ultimate effects of the original, outside-aided Kachin insurgency have yet to be determined.

The Karens Also Fight the Japanese

Although a considerable proportion of the Karen population was intermixed among the Burmese of lower Burma, a somewhat larger number lived in the hills and mountains east of the Sittang River and south along the Tenasserim coast. After the Japanese Army crossed the Sittang in early 1942 and the British forces were retreating toward upper Burma, a number of British officers volunteered to stay behind and organize resistance to the Japanese. These officers, the most well-known being Maj. H. P. Seagrim, went into the eastern hills to work with the Karen tribal groups. They had two advantages. First, the area of their activity soon ceased to be of interest to the Japanese as it was of slight military importance and had little in the way of economic resources. Second, many of the Karen tribal leaders were Christian, most were as violently anti-Japanese as they were anti-Burmese, and they were therefore willing to assist the British.⁵

Before the war, factionalism among the Karen political organizations prevented any crystallization of aims beyond the vague objective of preventing discrimination by the Burmese majority. Attempts of the Burmese nationalists to enlist Karen leaders in the cause of independence were hardly successful; although a few joined with the Burmese in the Anti-Fascist League established in 1944, Karen support was minimal and halfhearted. Communism seems to have had no appeal for the Karens or their leaders, and it is probable that the inclusion of Communists within the general Burmese independence movement during the war helped to make the Karens reluctant to work closely with the Burmese.

British Force 136 Operates in Karen Territory

Since British forces knew that their officers were engaged in raising Karen guerrilla forces, efforts were made in 1942 to make contact with them. The British organization for clandestine operations in wartime was centered in the Special Operations Executive (SOE) in London. Under this aegis, a unit known as Force 136 was specially organized for operations in Burma. Its objectives were the same as those of American OSS Detachment 101—to set up an intelligence network and to train and arm guerrilla units for harrassing the Japanese at the time of the British return into Burma. Officers of Force 136 operated in the Arakan region and in the Karen districts east of the Sittang.

Little difficulty was found in recruiting, since the Karens had suffered both from the Japanese Army and the Japanese-sponsored Burma Independence Army. The Karens thought that defeat of the Japanese would restore Burma to British rule, and in this they saw their only future as a people. Between 1942 and the end of 1944, small arms and mortars, explosives, and other equipment, as well as food, were airdropped to Karen units commanded by British officers. An effective intelligence network was established and an increasing number of Karens were trained to operate as guerrilla units at near company strength. The intelligence net was particularly useful, since

the Karens, similar in looks to the Burmese and more widely diffused among them, could travel into lower Burma, to Rangoon and other centers, without great fear of capture. They could thus obtain information from a wider variety of sources than were open to the similar Kachin operation in the north.

Karen Guerrilla Operations

By the beginning of 1945, an increasing number of Karen guerrilla units were in the field. They dynamited trains, supply dumps, and communication centers, as well as engaging in swift raids and fire fights with Japanese patrols. Force 136 at this time had nearly 5,000 Karens under arms and reported to British headquarters that it was difficult to restrain these guerrilla units from engaging the Japanese in force with the inevitable risk of defeat. British headquarters did not want to lose these units, which the Japanese could decimate by concerted effort if they became too worrisome; consequently the guerrillas were ordered not to extend their fighting until given the word by the commander of the British Army that had re-entered Burma.

In April and May of 1945, with the British driving the Japanese back toward Rangoon, the Karen guerrillas were ordered to mount large-scale and extensive attacks on Japanese units east of the Sittang. Their objective was to tie down and disrupt as much as possible the movement of the crack Japanese 15th Division, so that it would not help counter the British drive to Rangoon. This the Karen guerrillas did so effectively that the division's communications were cut, its supplies were disrupted, and it was prevented from moving east in time for the battle for Rangoon. It is estimated that between 200 and 2,000 casualties were suffered by the 5,000 organized Karen guerrillas in these last months of the war. 4

The consequences of the Karen insurgency are still being felt in Burma. The Karens became insurgents in the belief that the return of the British would give them security from the Burmese majority through some sort of autonomy in any postwar Burmese government. When the British left to the new Burmese Government the task of establishing a separate Karen state within the Union, the Karens found that they had lost effective British protection. At the mercy of the Burmese, they felt insecure; thus when negotiations broke down, it was the Karens—aided to a large degree by those trained by Force 136 during the war—who mounted the first postwar insurgency against the independent Burma Government.

Burmese Disillusionment

The Burmese insurgency against the Japanese was of a different order from that of the Kachins or the Karens. In the latter cases, the insurgents were organized by outside Allied help and would have been ineffective without it. In the case of the Burmese, the insurgency grew out of the prewar independence movement spearheaded by young Burmese. It should be said of the young Burmese leaders that they kept in mind a single political goal for their

country—*independence*. In their view, the Japanese, by ousting the British from Burma, had taken them a big step toward that goal. At first, they accepted Japanese plans for an "independent" government of Burma, but they were quick to realize the sham nature of this freedom. By the middle of 1943, few Burmese nationalist leaders were under any illusions about Japanese rule. News of Japanese defeats filtering into the country inspired hope among the Burmese that the Japanese would in turn be pushed out by the Allied forces concentrated for the reoccupation of Burma. At this point the Burmese were ready to become insurgents against the Japanese occupiers of their country.

The Burmese nationalists were in an unusually good position to act. Many of them had joined Dr. Ba Maw in a government established by the Japanese in August 1943. Others, like Than Tun and his Communist associates took cover in the districts, planning to organize the people as best they could under the noses of the Japanese. Gen. Aung San was not only commander of the Japanese-sponsored Burma Defense Army (reorganized from the original Burma Independence Army) but was also Defense Minister in the Ba Maw government. Thus, there was the unusual situation of an indigenous government, set up by the Japanese occupying forces, which contained within it the leaders of a nationalist movement with no loyalty to its sponsor.

From their posts in the government, the nationalist leaders knew most of what was going on and most of what the Japanese planned to do. They could further their own aims and organize, openly in part and secretly when necessary, with some mantle of protection. As an example, Aung San and his associates at one point persuaded some leading Karens to help in the recruitment of a Karen battalion for the Burma Defense Army and to cooperate with the efforts of the Burmese nationalists to build political strength in the countryside—not for the purpose of rising against the Japanese, but in preparation for the day when the Japanese would be driven from Burma. Again, U Nu has related that he was able to place several trusted men in the office of the Japanese secret military police headquarters so that they could give warning when any Burmese political agents were under scrutiny or subject to arrest.⁵

The Burmese Make Contact With the British

During September and October 1943, the first contacts were made between the Southeast Asia Command (SEAC) headquarters of Adm. Louis Mountbatten and Burmese leaders and officers under Aung San. A Burmese Communist, Thein Pe, had made his way out to India the previous year and worked with various organizations while being carefully checked by the British Army and by the Burmese Government-in-exile at Simla. His *bona fides* was finally accepted and Force 136 officers in Burma were instructed to evaluate the temper of the Burmese nationalists and the Burma Defense Army and, in particular, the character of Gen. Aung San. Reports sent out to SEAC headquarters in Colombo indicated that there was real disaffection

among the Burmese and that the Burma Defense Army might indeed turn against the Japanese if given arms and encouragement.⁶

At about the same time the first contacts were being made between the British and Gen. Aung San, Burmese nationalist leaders were trying to form some sort of political organization looking to the post-Japanese period. Under the vigorous leadership of Aung San and the Communist Than Tun, who had a flair for administration and organization, these efforts bore fruit in September 1944 with the establishment of the Anti-Fascist Organization (AFO). Although the leading young Burmese nationalists held offices in it, the AFO was nothing more than a loose coalition of a variety of political organizations and factions, including the Communists. Its manifesto, drawn up with the help of a number of the young leaders, was primarily designed to gain British approval and assistance. Its stated aims, purposely vague, served to help persuade Lord Mountbatten that there were large numbers of Burmese willing to take up insurgency against the Japanese. In the spring of 1945, the organization's name was changed to the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL).

In December 1944, over the objections of the civilian Burmese Government-in-exile at Simla, Lord Mountbatten decided to give arms to the Burmese insurgents as individuals, through Force 136 officers. Altogether the British supplied some 5,000 rifles and ammunition, as well as radio equipment for intelligence and liaison work, to these guerrillas.

Anti-Japanese Activities of the Burmese

By the beginning of 1945, considerable numbers of Burmese in small units had become a part of the anti-Japanese resistance. These small units in lower and middle Burma harried the Japanese by blowing up bridges, cutting communications, and supplying intelligence to Allied forces.

In addition, the Japanese-sponsored Burma army, which had been training for the past year, was preparing, under the leadership of Gen. Aung San, to leave Rangoon and turn against the Japanese forces according to plans being worked out between Gen. Aung San and the British Army staff. In March 1945, the Burma Defense Army by now renamed the Burma National Army (BNA), left Rangoon, ostensibly to join Japanese forces in fighting the advancing British. Once out of the capital, by a prearranged plan with the British, the BNA took up positions on the east and west flanks of the advancing British forces. After the capture of Rangoon, the BNA units were ordered to assist the British in preventing a link-up between the retreating Japanese and a division that had been caught to the west of the Irrawaddy; in this operation they seem to have been effective. The BNA was disbanded in August 1945, after British administration was re-established in lower Burma.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

Japanese plans for Southeast Asia centered on the capture of Malaya, Singapore, and the Netherlands East Indies. From these territories, Japan expected to obtain large supplies of raw materials for her war effort. Capture of the Philippines was vital to strategic control of the western Pacific and as protection for her Southeast Asian conquests. Capture of Burma, as flank protection on the west, was less necessary; but Burmese rice and other materials were considered essential to help sustain Japan's large armies in the region.

General Lines of Japanese Policy

Broad Japanese policy for Southeast Asia, approved in Tokyo in November 1941, provided for initial military administration in the captured territories, with decisions on the form of local government to come later. Nevertheless, on January 22, 1942, Premier Tojo told the Japanese Diet that Japan planned to give "independence" to Burma and the Philippines, provided those peoples understood the true intentions of the Japanese.⁸ Letting the Burmese have their own government under Japanese control was certainly designed as a strategic measure that would help attain Japanese political aims, tend to prevent insurgency, and leave the Japanese free to exploit the resources of the country. This move also bolstered the generally imaginative Japanese propaganda line that Asian countries were to be united in a "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere." The addition of Burma and the Philippines to the "independent" regimes of Manchukuo and of Wang Ching-wei in China, gave substance to the argument that the Japanese were making progress toward their goals.

Japan's conquest of Burma was aided by three factors: (1) British unpreparedness and the consequent collapse of Allied resistance, even ahead of the Japanese timetable; (2) lack of any real Burmese loyalty to their British overlords and their initial welcome of the Japanese as liberators; and (3) the initial psychological effect of the entry of the Burma Independence Army along with Japanese forces, lending credence to the idea that Japan was granting Burma its freedom. By June 1942, Allied forces had been routed from all of Burma except the far north-east Kachin territory, and the Japanese could proceed to consolidate their occupation of the country.

Japan's Program for Pacification

Japanese counterinsurgency efforts mainly consisted of a two-part program of pacification, geared to support their military operations and their exploitation of Burma's resources. The first part consisted of extensive measures to search out dissidents, Allied agents, and any individuals who might be capable of organizing significant anti-Japanese resistance in the country. This effort necessitated a widespread organization and development of local agencies designed to prevent dissidence and outbreaks of disorder among the mass of the population.

These activities might be described as negative efforts. The second part consisted of positive attempts to establish a Burmese government which could relieve the Japanese occupation administration of many of its tasks and which would mobilize the people behind Japanese aims and the total Japanese war effort. Although the two parts of the program were interrelated in practice and Japanese efforts in each direction interacted on each other, these two aspects of the Japanese counterinsurgency deserve separate discussion.

The Kempetai—Instrument of "Negative" Action

Direct action to control potential insurgency was largely the responsibility of the secret military police, called the Kempetai. This agency worked closely with the Japanese Army and with the Japanese military liaison with the Burmese civilian government; it was directly under the Japanese Commander in Chief for Burma, Major-General Iida. Major-General Matsuoka, who had had experience in China, headed the Kempetai and was virtually second-in-command to Major-General Iida.

The Kempetai had been first organized as military police in Manchuria after Japanese occupation there. With the expansion of Japan's conquests in China, the organization had expanded its functions to counterintelligence, espionage, and a variety of secret activities necessary for effective counterinsurgency action. It had its own supply and transport and its own funds. Its personnel had been well trained in the 1930's and by 1942 had gained much experience in occupied China. Apart from the higher officers, however, recruitment during its period of rapid expansion had brought to its ranks what can only be called the riffraff of Japanese youth, hardened criminals, and rejects from army service. Everywhere in East Asia the Kempetai had fostered and earned a reputation for brutality and ruthlessness.⁹

As the Japanese Army moved into Burma, the Kempetai moved with them and immediately set about building an extensive intelligence network. Between January and June 1942, while military operations were still in progress, its chief efforts were directed to ferreting out Allied agents, rounding up British subjects and other enemy aliens, and compiling dossiers on all Burmese who might be suspected of anti-Japanese activity. As fast as the Japanese armies cleared areas of Allied forces, Kempetai agents set up local police forces in towns and rural areas throughout Burma proper and began building a network of paid local informers. The Japanese found many Burmese willing to work with them, since it gave them authority and increased their prestige, as well as provided material benefits. The methods of the Kempetai were simple and direct. Suspects were arrested, subjected to various forms of physical torture, and usually released. Key local leaders were not jailed indefinitely after being tortured but were either used as agents or simply let free to spread the word about the brutality of the Kempetai.

Since the Kempetai was largely responsible for internal security in the occupied territory, it also organized extensive local "Peace Commission" or "Peace Preservation Committees" in 1943. This same technique had been used in China. Since its reputation for brutality had been

established, it did not encounter too much difficulty in getting local officials and respected individuals in the rural districts to cooperate as heads of these units. The peace committees served both to provide the Kempetai with local intelligence and to act as channels of propaganda. Although closely supervised and controlled, the committees did have some authority and could act for the Burmese as intermediaries with both the Kempetai and the Japanese Army. It was the old carrot and stick technique, and it worked very well.

Positive Action: A Burmese Army

The Japanese program of positive counterinsurgency action included a number of interrelated elements. First, the Japanese planned to use the Burma Independence Army (BIA) as a force to maintain internal order and, hopefully, as an auxiliary arm in military operations.

In this case, the Japanese high command simply took advantage of an opportunity which had come as a result of prewar espionage. Some time before 1940, a Col. Keiji Suzuki, who had served in Manchuria, had been sent to Rangoon as an intelligence agent with a broad directive to identify anti-British leadership among the Burmese. Through other Japanese agents, he eventually got in touch with some of the younger Thakin group. When young Aung San was sent out of Burma in late 1940 to seek help from China for the Burmese nationalists, it was on Colonel Suzuki's orders that he was picked up in Amoy and taken to Japan.¹⁰

Colonel Suzuki conceived a rather grandiose plan for a pro-Japanese Burma army with himself in the role of leader, and, after getting approval from the Japanese high command, he sent Aung San back to Burma to recruit the group who later became famous as the Thirty Comrades. This nucleus was given military training on Hainan Island and, in late 1941, was moved to Bangkok. Returning to Burma with the Japanese Army, and under the command of Colonel Suzuki, who had taken the Burmese name of Bo Mogoe (General Lightning), the Burmese army, originally about 4,000 Burmese, gathered recruits as it went north with the Japanese to Rangoon. In fact, it was a rabble army, ill-trained and ill-disciplined, but with arms; and its members swelled to some 20,000 by the time Rangoon was taken in March 1942.

The Japanese were soon disillusioned about the worth of the Burma Independence Army as a counterinsurgency force. Burmese troops were far more interested in establishing their own network of authority and in paying off old grudges against Karens in the delta area than in subjecting themselves to Japanese control and discipline. BIA troops that had fanned out through lower Burma by the summer of 1942 were reported to have gotten in the way of both the Kempetai and the Japanese Army; recommendations were subsequently made for their disarmament.

The Burma army was saved through the efforts of the Burmese themselves, as well as Japanese willingness to make political concessions. In July and August 1942, the Japanese high command moved to set up a Burmese committee preparatory to the establishment of an "independent" government. Aung San was a member of this group and insisted that an "independent

Burma" must have its own army. The Japanese conceded this but obtained agreement for its thorough reorganization. Consequently, during August and October 1942, the large and unwieldy Burmese force was disbanded, partially disarmed, and reorganized as the Burma Defense Army (BDA). Aung San was given the position of major-general and commander in chief. After careful screening, the reorganized force consisted of three infantry battalions, a headquarters, and a school for commissioned and non-commissioned officers. Its initial size was approximately 7,000, but it was contemplated that, by more thorough training of recruits, it might be increased to around 12,000. ¹¹

From this time on, the Japanese kept BDA units dispersed, and neither the Kempetai nor the Japanese Regular Army trusted them with any but garrison duties. Indeed, instead of becoming an instrument of counterinsurgency, the Burma Defense Army, renamed the Burma National Army (BNA) in 1944, was to become, under Aung San, an effective instrument of Burmese insurgency against the Japanese.

Positive Action: A Burmese Government

A second element in Japan's positive counterinsurgency plans was the creation of a Burmese government which would take over general administrative functions and which could be used in a variety of ways to keep the people pacified and to enlist their support. Colonel Suzuki had reported contacts with two prominent prewar Burmese leaders, U Saw and Dr. Ba Maw. Both were known to have a political following, both were ambitious, and both were believed to be pro-Japanese and strongly anti-British. U Saw had been captured and interned outside of Burma by the British at the start of the war for having had contacts with the enemy. Ba Maw, however, was available since he was in a Burmese jail when the Japanese entered Burma. With the general agreement of the younger Burmese nationalists under Aung San that Ba Maw should head a new government, he was made chief of the preparatory committee in August 1942. After Premier Tojo declared, in January 1943, that both Burma and the Philippines would get their "independence" within the year, Ba Maw pressed for action. In August 1943, the Japanese installed, with great ceremony, a Burma government, which then signed an alliance with Japan and declared war on Britain and the United States. ¹²

As a means of keeping the country reasonably well pacified, Dr. Ba Maw's government served Japanese counterinsurgent efforts fairly well. On the other hand, Ba Maw was a French-educated, rather vain man with great ambitions; and he refused to submit to Japanese orders completely. By attempting to protect civilians against the rapaciousness of both the military and the Kempetai, even complaining to Premier Tojo, he so annoyed the Japanese that three attempts were made by the Kempetai to assassinate him. More important, while he preached cooperation with the Japanese, he also permitted the younger Burmese nationalists, some of them members of his cabinet, to organize a large anti-Japanese resistance network. Dr. Ba Maw

retreated with the Japanese from Rangoon in May 1945 and was interned and interrogated in Tokyo after Japan's surrender.

Other Japanese Measures

Other Japanese counterinsurgency efforts included attempts to set up supervised mass organizations, to influence Burmese leaders by sending them on goodwill missions to Tokyo, and to disseminate propaganda in behalf of Japanese war aims.

The only mass organization that the Japanese succeeded in getting under way was the East Asia Youth League. It was designed as a nonpolitical, social service organization and did very effective work in alleviating civilian suffering. It was never fully controlled by the Japanese, however, and in late 1944, it became an anti-Japanese political organization associated with Aung San's Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League.¹³

Burmese missions sent to Japan were not particularly effective in creating goodwill. For some strange reason, these missions were routed through Manila and the travelers permitted contact with the Filipinos. Most of the Burmese leaders were impressed with the anti-Japanese feelings of the Filipinos and their confidence that the United States would win the war and give them their scheduled independence. The missions were thus counterproductive, neither creating faith in Japan nor augmenting distrust in the Allies.

Japanese mass propaganda was effective during the first two years of the war when the Japanese seemed to be winning. Radio, newspapers, speeches by Burmese leaders on tour in the country, and leaflets in Burmese were the principal means of dissemination. The local peace committees were also used extensively as propaganda channels. It was only when news of Japanese losses filtered into Burma and after the Japanese invasion of India has been halted that this propaganda began to lose its effect.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

Looked at from one point of view, Japanese preventive counterinsurgency efforts were far from successful. The Burma National Army, although fashioned to serve Japanese purposes, became a vehicle of anti-Japanese resistance. The Burma Government cooperated with the Japanese war effort reluctantly and could not be said to have contributed much toward Japanese objectives. Japanese propaganda of "Asia for the Asiatics" and the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was nullified by the fear and antagonism stirred up by the brutality of the Kempetai and by the utter disregard of the Japanese Army for Burmese susceptibilities. Japanese soldiers violated Burmese customs right and left, treated the Burmese populace with contempt and brutality, profaned the religious precincts of the pagodas, and generally made themselves thoroughly disliked. After initially welcoming the Japanese as liberators of Burma

from British rule, the Burmese populace became either apathetic or filled with active hatred. By 1945 they were glad to see the Japanese go and even welcomed back the British forces.

Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to conclude that the Japanese counterinsurgency effort was a total failure. Until March 1945, the Japanese were confronted with only one important insurgent group they could not control—the Kachins. Although some of the Chin peoples to the west of the Irrawaddy were used as scouts and as intelligence gatherers by the British, the Chins as a whole were quiet and gave the Japanese little trouble. In the large area of the Shan states, the Japanese persuaded the sawbwas to swear allegiance in 1942; since this area was not within the theater of military operations, the Japanese had little trouble from that quarter. The large Karen guerrilla forces officered and trained by British Force 136, were not used until the last months of the war; prior to that, their guerrilla activities were not much more than a nuisance to Japanese military operations. Although the Burmese nationalists were able to build a political organization in rural areas and up-country and to indoctrinate the Burma army with nationalist and anti-Japanese feelings, the Burmese leaders dared open, armed resistance only in 1945 when the Allied forces had passed Mandalay and were driving for Rangoon.

The creation of terror and fear was the most effective Japanese counterinsurgency measure. The very brutality of the Japanese soldiers and of the Kempetai, aided by their effective intelligence effort, struck terror among Burmese civilians. Physical torture of individuals and the arbitrary use of force made the Japanese less hated than feared. The cowed civilian populace concentrated on filling immediate and personal wants and on avoiding Japanese anger. On the other hand, the success of terrorization depended on continued military success all along the line.

In the end, it was not the Japanese counterinsurgency but the Japanese military campaign that failed. If the fortunes of war had been favorable and the Japanese had remained longer in Burma, even the incipient insurgency of the Burmese and the Karens might have been suppressed, since the Japanese did know what was going on and who the insurgent leaders were. Pre-occupied with imminent defeat and withdrawal from Burma, the Japanese high command made no attempt to deal with the Karen and Burmese insurgencies; they may even have preferred to leave the country in chaos so as to embarrass the returning Allied forces.

Long Range Results of the Wartime Situation

The long range consequences of the wartime insurgencies in Burma and of Japanese counterinsurgency measures were important in terms of Burma's future. First, there was a general breakdown of law and order. During four years of occupation, the people of Burma became accustomed to taking the law into their own hands. Grudges and disputes were often settled by informing to the Kempetai. This tended to lead to violent retaliation, made easier by the fact that the Burmese possessed weapons. Lawlessness was enhanced both by the widespread Allied

distribution of arms to insurgent groups and by the Japanese arming of the Burmese for self-protection. Burma became an arms-saturated country. Demobilizing the underground and guerrilla groups presented the new postwar Burma Government with an almost insuperable problem.

Second, involvement of the Kachin and Karen minority peoples in the Allied-organized insurgency increased their bitterness toward the Burmese majority. When these minorities found themselves without Allied protection under the postwar Burma Government, they were ready to use violence if necessary. Wartime training in the use of arms and in guerrilla tactics by Allied officers made it easier for elements of these two groups to resort again to insurgency.

Third, the failure of the Japanese to employ effective counterinsurgency measures against the Burmese nationalist organizations before 1945, for whatever reasons, provided an opportunity for the Burmese Communists to organize effectively in areas of middle Burma and toward the Salween River. With arms easily available after Japan's surrender, the Communist insurrection of 1949 was made possible, even facilitated.*

The experience of the Burmese nationalist leaders, both in the groups which operated virtually underground in the last two years of the war and in the groups which worked openly in the government of Ba Maw, enabled them to win support from the general populace for the true freedom for Burma that they had found the Japanese unwilling to grant. Aung San and his Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, which included leftwing and Communist groups, confronted the returning British administration with a popularly supported nationalist organization pledged to attain complete freedom. The British had either to treat the AFPFL and the Burma National Army as an insurgency or to negotiate with the nationalist leaders for an end to colonial rule. Lord Mountbatten decided, over considerable opposition, to negotiate with Aung San. The AFPFL pressed to gain Burma's immediate independence, and the British Labor Government agreed in 1947 to a free Burma. The Union of Burma came into being on January 4, 1948.

Finally, the consequences of Japanese occupation and the wartime insurgencies, which forced such a rapid granting of Burmese independence, left the new and inexperienced Burma Government little opportunity to enlist outside aid in rehabilitating the country or in establishing law and order. Aung San himself was assassinated with six other cabinet ministers on July 19, 1947, at the instigation of the returned Burmese politician U Saw—an incident that was only a microcosm of the larger problem. Wartime habits of violence are not forgotten overnight and major insurgencies still plague the Burma Government, almost 20 years after the Japanese withdrawal.

*See Chapter 14, "Burma (1948-1960)."

NOTES

¹ For basic background information, see Louis J. Walinsky, Economic Development in Burma (New York: 20th Century Fund, 1962), Ch. 1; J. Russell Andrus, Burmese Economic Life (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1948); also John F. Cady, A History of Modern Burma (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1958).

² For a firsthand account of Detachment 101, see William R. Peers and Dean Brelis, Behind the Burma Road (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1963).

³ F. S. V. Donnison, British Military Administration in the Far East (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1956).

⁴ Sir William Slim, Defeat into Victory (London: Cassell, 1956), Chs. 7 and 8.

⁵ U Nu, Burma Under the Japanese (London: Macmillan, 1954), Chs. 4 and 5.

⁶ Donnison, British Military Administration, Ch. 14.

⁷ Slim, Defeat, Ch. 23.

⁸ F. C. Jones, Japan's New Order in East Asia (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 353, and Ch. 11, passim.

⁹ See U Nu, Burma; Maung Maung, Aung San of Burma (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962).

¹⁰ Suzuki in Maung, Aung San.

¹¹ Maung, Aung San.

¹² Cady, Modern Burma, Ch. 14.

¹³ Ibid.

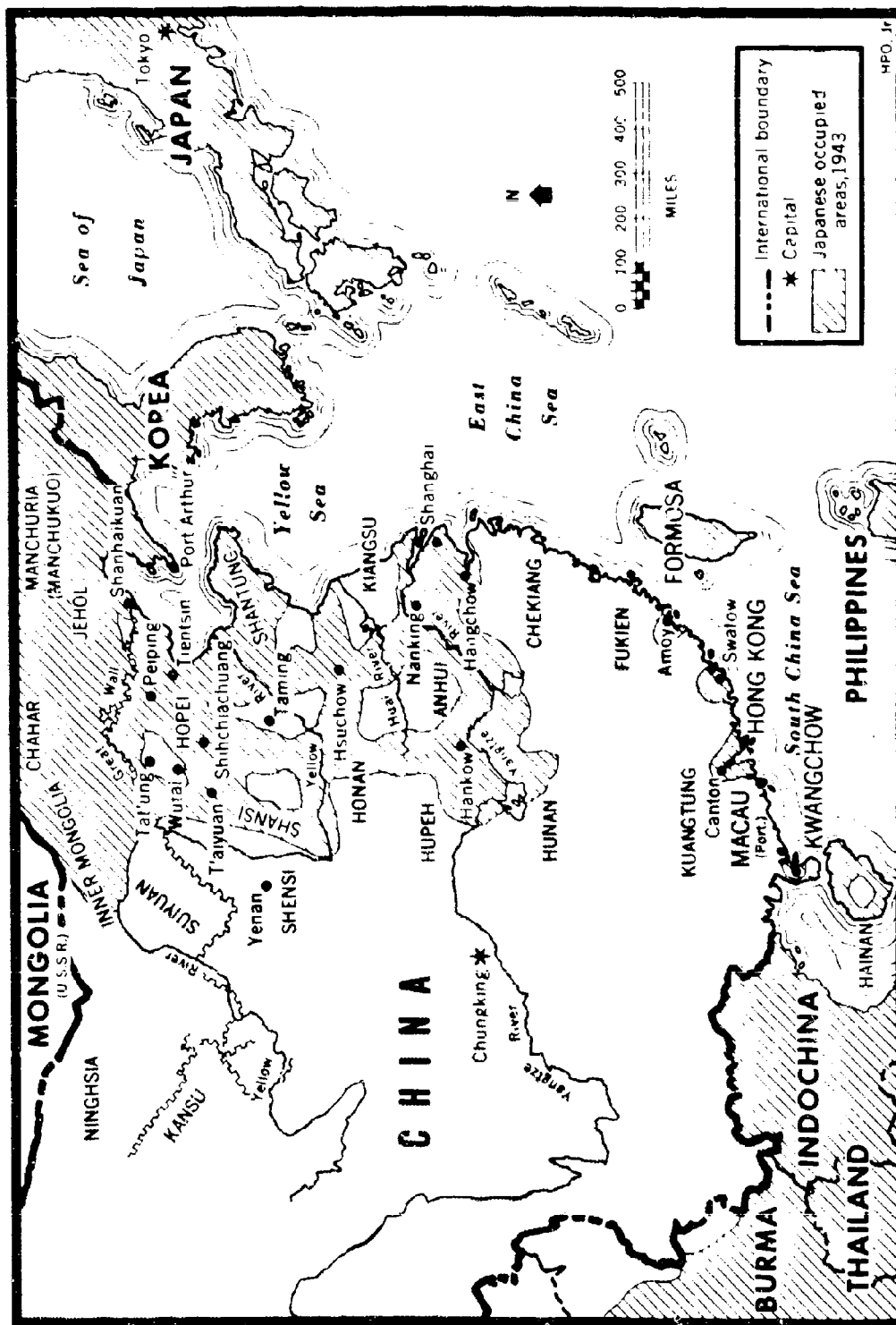
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Chapter Six

**CHINA
1937-1945**

by Michael Lindsay



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After some years of faulty strategy, the Japanese in China—mainly by military means and in spite of political failure—made considerable gains against the Communist Chinese guerrillas between 1940 and 1943; after that, Japanese forces were weakened by their losses in World War II and by 1945 counterinsurgency in China was collapsing.

BACKGROUND

When the Japanese invaded China in the 1930's, it was a country racked with internal political discord and civil war. The Kuomintang leaders of the National Government had never succeeded in fully consolidating their hold over the various warlord regimes of the country; and after 1927 Kuomintang leader Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek had been engaged in civil war, not only with the warlords, but with an infinitely more dangerous enemy, the Chinese Communists.* By 1936 the Nationalists had been able to drive the Communists out of their bases in South China and the Yangtze basin in Central China, forcing them to undertake the famous Long March to the Shensi-Kansu border in the remote northwest. But the mounting pressure of the Japanese during this same period gave the Communists a new lease on life. When Chiang tried to temporize in dealing with Japan, the Communists declared their intention to fight for China's national integrity without any compromise, thus forcing the National Government to adopt a firmer policy toward Japan in 1937.

For China, World War II began on July 7, 1937, with the famous Lukouchiao Incident, when Japanese troops on night maneuvers clashed with Chinese forces. This incident, which quickly developed into undeclared general warfare between Chinese and Japanese troops in North China, heralded one more phase in a series of assaults on Chinese territory by the Japanese. In 1931-32 they had invaded Manchuria and attacked Shanghai; in 1933 they had imposed on China the Tangku truce agreement, whereby Manchuria—including Heilungkiang, Kirin, and Liaoning Provinces, and the Chinese Province of Jehol—became the de facto Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo, and in 1935 they had established still another puppet regime, called the East Hopei

*See ch. 2, "China (1927-1937)."

Autonomous Government, governing the occupied area between Manchuria and the Peiping-Tientsin railroad.

The fighting in 1937 was initially confined to the Peiping-Tientsin area, and there were some efforts on both sides to localize and settle the conflict. It was only at the end of August that the Japanese Army broke through the Nankou Pass to the northwest of Peiping.* By the middle of September the army began a general advance southward from Peiping, conquering most of Hopei by the end of October and capturing Taiyuan, the capital of Shansi, by the beginning of November. The advance to the Yangtze River along the Peiping-Hankow railway and in southwest Shansi did not take place until February 1938, and it was only that spring that the Japanese Army conquered southern Shantung and joined up with forces moving north from the Yangtze River. By October 1938, the Japanese controlled Canton and all major seaports and had penetrated into the Yangtze basin as far west as Hankow. In 1938 the National Government fled to Chungking, which remained its capital throughout World War II.

The Chinese Unite Against Japan

After the war had started, the Chinese Communists and Nationalists had entered into a United Front agreement¹ to oppose China's common enemy, the Japanese. The Communists undertook to abandon all their attempts at overthrowing the Kuomintang by force, confiscating land from the landlords, and setting up a soviet-type government. They agreed to place their Red Army under the National Government's control, and, on September 22, 1937, the United Front was officially launched.

On its side, the National Government recognized three divisions of Communist troops in North China—the 115th, 120th, and 129th Divisions of the Eighth Route Army (later known as the Eighteenth Group Army)—as part of the Chinese National Army. Normally, three divisions would have included about 45,000 men, but some estimates have placed the Communist Eighth Route Army at 90,000.* The National Government also recognized the Communist administration as a regional government in the northwest area it controlled and allotted a rather wider surrounding area as the garrison and recruiting area for the Eighth Route Army.

The Communist force moved east across the Yellow River and cooperated with the forces of Yen Hsi-shan, warlord Governor of Shansi Province and commander of the Second War Zone, in resisting the invasion of Shansi. The Communist army ambushed and defeated one Japanese column invading Shansi from the north at P'inghsing-kuan, a pass into the upper Futoho valley;

*The traditional capital city of China, Peking, was renamed Peiping by the National Government in 1928; this was changed back to Peking by the Communists in 1949.

¹The writer would doubt whether the small and still very poor Communist base area could have supported this number in the regular forces, as opposed to part-time village militia. For a discussion of estimates of the size of the Communist forces at various times, see Chalmers A. Johnson, Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power, pp. 72-77.

but other Japanese forces advancing from the east along the Shihchiachuang-T'aiyuan railway and from the north along the Tat'ung-T'aiyuan railway captured T'aiyuan on November 8 and advanced southward down the Fen River valley.

This left the Communist 115th Division in the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei border area completely surrounded by Japanese-held railway lines and the 129th Division in southeast Shansi with Japanese-held lines on three sides. The 120th Division was in northwest Shansi. All these areas were mountainous and very suitable as guerrilla base areas.

Because of these circumstances, a rather confused picture obtained when the military situation was more or less stabilized in 1938. The Kuomintang forces of the National Government held a regular military front against the Japanese throughout the war, but in addition there were insurgent-type, guerrilla operations behind Japanese lines in occupied China. Both the Communist Eighth Route Army and National Government forces operated in the northern theater until 1943, after which time the Communists were in control. In the central theater, there were both Kuomintang partisans and Communist guerrillas organized as the New Fourth Army.* After 1943, the Communists became the predominant force. Communist operations were also being conducted, on a much smaller scale, in northern Hupeh, around Canton, and on Hainan Island. Thus, although Kuomintang partisans sometimes operated behind Japanese lines, with a resulting triangular conflict in some instances, the Communist guerrillas were the major insurgents during World War II, especially in North China. This study focuses mainly on these Communist guerrilla operations in the north.

Northern Theater of Operations

The North China theater was roughly a 400-mile square, rather more if Shantung was included. It was bounded on the east by the sea, on the west and southwest by the Yellow River,[†] and on the southeast by the Lung-Hai railway, which followed the westward line of the Yellow River to the sea in southern Shantung. In the northeast it extended, in the latter years of the war, slightly north of the Great Wall into southern Manchuria, and, in the northwest, somewhat north of the Great Wall toward Inner Mongolia.

This area included the whole of the provinces of Shantung (area 57,000 square miles, population 29 million), Hopei (area 54,000 square miles, population 30 million), and Shansi (area

*The term "New" was applied to irregular forces incorporated into the Chinese National Army. The New Fifth Army, for example, was originally a force called the Hopei-Chahar Guerrillas.

[†]Before June 1938, the Yellow River turned northeast after it emerged on the plains to flow into the sea north of the Shantung peninsula. In June 1938 the dikes were blown to halt the advance of the Japanese Army and the river changed course, joining with the Huai River and flowing into the sea south of the Shantung peninsula. It was diverted back into its old course after the war.

21,000 square miles, population 12 million), the part of Honan which extends north of the Yellow River between Hopei and Shansi (area roughly 5,000 square miles, population perhaps 4 or 5 million), the southern part of Chahar (total area 110,000 square miles, population 2 million), and the southeastern part of Suiyuan (total area 128,000 square miles, population 2 million).² The sparsely populated provinces of Chahar and Suiyuan extended into the Gobi Desert in the north.

Some islands of non-Communist influence remained in this vast northern theater. An area in southwest Shansi remained throughout under the control of Yen Hsi-shan, who had ruled Shansi Province since 1912, sharing control of northwest Shansi with the Communists until 1939. Until 1943, National Government regular forces held a front north of the Yellow River in south Shansi and northern Honan. National Government forces operated in south Hopei from the summer of 1938 until the latter part of 1940. In Shantung there were fairly large National Government forces until 1943; a few small units survived into 1945. It was only toward the end of the war that almost the whole of Shantung became the scene of Communist operations.

To the west of the Yellow River, which forms the western boundary of Shansi, was the original Communist base area around Yen-an. Mostly in northern Shensi, the base area also included small parts of Kansu and Ninghsia and had only 1.5 to 2 million inhabitants. Because the Japanese never crossed west of the Yellow River, this area never became a theater of operations. It was important to the Communists, since it provided an undisturbed area for Communist Party headquarters, training schools, etc.*

The terrain of this North China theater was quite varied. To the north and west of the mountain range bordering Peiping, the country is nearly all mountainous until it merges into the Mongolian plateau in the northwest; the highest mountain, Hsiao Wut'aishan, some hundred miles southwest of Peiping, is nearly 10,000 feet, but heights of 5,000 to 7,000 feet are more common. Shansi Province has some wide valleys and some areas of plateau in the south, but a great deal of this country is extremely rugged, with a complicated system of narrow and twisting valleys. Much of Hopei is a very flat plain, though it should be noted that large parts of this plain were not entirely devoid of natural cover. There are sunken cart tracks and often a difference in level of a few feet between fields. Except for some forests in western Shansi and small patches of woods or scattered trees, the area is completely deforested. Southern and eastern Shantung are also mountainous, though the terrain is not so rugged as in the western sector.

*It was this original base area which gave rise to the myth of the "Communist Northwest," which appears in many accounts of the period. Even by the beginning of 1938, the expansion of Communist forces to the east had made this term inappropriate. In 1945 the author tried to calculate the center of population of the Communist-controlled areas from data available at Yen-an and found that it was probably around the southern part of the Hopei-Shantung border. In relation to China without Manchuria, "Communist Northeast" would be the more correct term.

Central Theater of Operations

The Central China theater was comprised of the lower Yangtze River valley with extensions northward along the coast to Shantung and southward toward Hangchow Bay. It included almost all of the Province of Kiangsu (area 41,700 square miles, population 34 million), the northern part of Chekiang (total area 39,000 square miles, total population 21 million), and parts of Anhui (total area 56,000 square miles, total population 22 million). The terrain of the central theater was somewhat less suitable for guerrilla-type operations than that of the northern theater. There are some hills with patches of bamboo forest in northern Chekiang and southwest Kiangsu, but the rest of the area is very flat. It differs from the North China plain in being intersected by numerous rivers and irrigation channels; and, in large parts of Kiangsu, local transportation is primarily by boat. Over almost all this area, National Government, as well as Communist, forces were operating for much of the period.

The climate of the two theaters is very different. Most of the North China area is quite cold in winter, with temperatures remaining continuously below freezing for about two months in the Peiping area and longer in the mountains. The rainfall, which decreases from southeast to northwest, is concentrated in a summer rainy season starting abruptly in mid-July and tapering off after August. From October to June a high proportion of days are cloudless, though there are some light snowfalls in winter and some spring rains which, though erratic, are important for agriculture. Central China is warmer and damper. Temperatures only occasionally fall below freezing in the Yangtze valley, where rainfall is higher and not so concentrated in the summer.

Roads and Railroads

The Japanese occupiers were very concerned with maintaining open lines of communication, and the communications network became the major target of insurgent operations. The railway system of North China was fairly extensive, with three lines running from north to south and three from east to west. The main line from Manchuria ran along the coast at Shanhaikuan to Tientsin and then south to Nanking. In the Central China theater, railways covered two sides of the triangle from Shanghai to Hangchow and to Nanking. The southern section of the Tientsin-Nanking railway went through an area where Chinese operations were conducted by National Government rather than Communist forces.

Maps show a fair number of roads on the North China plain, but these were very poor. The Peiping-Tientsin highway had one narrow tarred lane for the greater part of its length. Many roads were nothing more than a strip of land set aside for traffic, with bridges over the main rivers. These were usable, though very dusty, in dry weather, but became a sea of mud in the rainy season—the Japanese Army's idea of making an all-weather road was to put down a layer of pebbles from a river bed. There were few roads in the mountains. In the 180 miles between

Peiping and Shihchiachuang only one motorable road led out of the Hopei plain over the T'aihang range into Shansi. Shansi had some roads, nearly all unpaved, in the main valleys and on the southern plateau, but there were very large areas in the mountains where no wheeled vehicles of any kind were used. Transport depended entirely on porters or pack animals. In the Central China theater, some fairly good roads radiated from Shanghai, but a great deal of the area depended on water transport.

Agriculture and Light Industry

Although there was industry in the major cities—and a certain amount of industrial development had started before 1937 even in some of the smaller towns—the great majority of the Chinese population depended on agriculture. The plains were almost completely cultivated, and settlement extended even into the most remote mountain valleys. This was important, as it meant that the Chinese insurgents in the mountains could get food and shelter from the local populations.

The main food crops in North China were millet, wheat, corn, soya beans, and kaoliang (grain sorghum). Kaoliang had some military importance as it grew about 10 feet high and provided good cover. Oil was produced from peanuts, sesame, and other crops. Cotton was widely cultivated—central Hopei had been the main cotton-growing area of China before 1937. Tobacco was also generally grown. In Central China rice replaced wheat and millet as the main grain crop.

Except for salt, the typical Chinese village was entirely self-sufficient in food; even the smallest village in North China had primitive milling equipment worked by human or animal power. Some hand spinning and weaving had survived and were easily expandable so that the country areas could become self-sufficient in clothing as well. Cloth shoes were standard footwear in North China, as were straw sandals in Central China, their manufacture a traditional chore of the village women. A local handicraft papermaking industry had survived in many places. Wartime Communist publications on this rough local paper were sometimes hard to read, but proved much more durable than more elegant publications of the same period printed on wood pulp paper. By 1937, kerosene lamps had spread even into very remote villages, but they were not essential and could be replaced by vegetable-oil lamps, though these latter gave only about one-half candle power. The only absolute necessities which the village had to get from outside were salt, iron for agricultural implements, and some small items such as needles.

People and Language

Both theaters were densely populated. The people were pure Chinese, although some Muslim Chinese in the north regarded themselves to some extent as a separate community. In the

extreme north, the Chinese population merged with the Mongolian, but the Mongol areas were almost all outside the zone of Communist insurgent operations.

Standard spoken Chinese (*Kuo-yu*) was generally intelligible throughout North China, except for some of the more remote mountain regions which had local dialects that were hard to understand. In the Central China area the Shanghai and Ningpo (north Chekiang) dialects were somewhat different from standard Chinese, but the differences were not nearly so great as they were for Cantonese or the various Fukien dialects, and anyone who spoke standard Chinese could soon learn to make himself understood in Central China.

Illiteracy was common in wartime China. Although literacy in Chinese is often defined as knowledge of 1,000, or sometimes 1,200 characters, this was adequate only for simple material. The Chinese telegraph code had nearly 10,000 characters, and 3,000 to 4,000 were needed for ordinary newspaper reading. Although the prewar development of schools had been greatest in Central China and the literacy rate was fairly high in the economically more developed areas of North China, illiteracy was almost total in many mountain regions. Less than 100 miles from Peiping, the writer met a man who claimed he was the only person able to read and write in his entire valley, which included several villages. During the war the Communists put forth great effort to develop education of all kinds. The introduction of their more elaborate system of administration produced a demand for literacy—even farmers needed to fill in forms. Thus the level of literacy increased during the insurgency and became fairly high in the Communist army, where a rate of about 40 percent was claimed.

Attitudes Toward the Japanese

The educated minority was hostile to the Japanese from the start, and in the course of time nationalist feeling could have been expected to spread; but in 1937 the ordinary peasant in North China had little political consciousness and no particular sense of loyalty to any Chinese government. North China had been under warlord regimes for 20 years. In Shansi, Yen Hsi-shan had provided comparatively good local government, though he always gave first priority to maintaining his own power and had not inspired any strong loyalty among his subjects. The rest of North China had been a civil war battleground between 1917 and 1930 and had been partly isolated from the nationalist influences that had developed in South and Central China. North China had never been brought under the full control of the National Government, and such Kuomintang organization as had developed had been dissolved under the Ho-Umetzu agreement in 1935, when the Japanese forced the Chinese Nationalists to disband the Kuomintang party organization in Hopei, Chahar, and Shansi. Furthermore, almost all regimes within living memory had been primarily concerned with exploiting the people.

Thus, to win tolerance from the great majority and even a fair degree of popular approval, the Japanese would probably have needed only to behave rather better than the old warlord

armies, which had been notorious for looting, and to provide better government than the former warlord regimes, which had set a standard easy to improve on. This was the estimate of the situation which one heard from missionaries stationed in the countryside in the early period of the war, and it was confirmed in 1938 by officers in the Communist forces who complained that it was hard to arouse enthusiasm in areas where the Japanese Army had not penetrated.

In fact, the Japanese Army showed itself to be much worse than any of the warlord armies for looting, rape, and indiscriminate killing; and the Japanese administration that followed was even more corrupt and more exploitative than any of the previous Chinese regimes. In many areas, experience with the Japanese was such that the peasants spoke of them as if they were some kind of dangerous wild animals with whom there was no possible relationship except determined resistance. The result was that, wherever the Japanese Army had been, it became easy to organize an anti-Japanese resistance movement.

INSURGENCY

Over a great deal of North China the beginnings of insurgency were spontaneous and local. Since a high proportion of Chinese officials had retreated with the National Government armies, leaving large parts of the countryside without any organized government, local leaders organized village self-defense units or small anti-Japanese forces. Some of these leaders were members of the old gentry class who maintained their traditional function of organizing any necessary local collective action. Others were schoolteachers, politically conscious men whose education gave them a natural claim to leadership in the Chinese cultural environment. Still others were officers from the regular Chinese armies who had been cut off in the retreat or who had deliberately stayed behind to organize local resistance.

Logistical Factors Require an Efficient Underground Administration

It was originally possible to organize these local forces because weapons, at least rifles, were easily available, many having been abandoned by the retreating Chinese armies. Large parts of the Chinese countryside, furthermore, had been fought over so many times during the previous period that almost every village had a number of rifles and some ammunition. Some 1890 rifles were still in use in the 1940's. Even though the various warlord armies had been virtually independent, Chinese armies seem all to have used a standard rifle cartridge since the 1890's.

To turn these local forces into a serious insurgency movement required coordination and training and, most important for the long run, the development of an underground governmental organization that could enlist and maintain popular support. In the first flush of enthusiasm for resistance to Japan, it was possible for guerrilla units to support themselves by unorganized

requisitioning without arousing serious popular resentment. But as the war went on and Japanese pressure increased, the Chinese, though still willing to support resistance, would only do so through a reasonably fair system. An efficient civilian administration was thus needed to provide an equitable system of taxation, maintain logistics support, obtain intelligence and counterintelligence information, and secure alternate safe areas for beleaguered forces. It was also needed because the insurgent areas had of necessity to be self-sufficient. Many areas were cut off by strips of Japanese-held territory along the railway lines; even when they were not, as in south and west Shansi and several Central China areas, transportation was often very poor and depended on pack animals or porters. Such areas had to be well administered if they were to be able to support insurgent forces.

Not only was a good civilian organization a logistical and intelligence necessity, but there were further advantages when the area was fairly large. During Japanese mopping-up operations, insurgent forces had to move to avoid encirclement or a pitched battle and they were in a much stronger position if they could move into already organized areas until the Japanese pressure in their original base area had relaxed.

The greater the degree of Japanese pressure, the more essential was popular support, and thus organization. The real test of the organization in any area was its ability to recover from a serious Japanese attack: if the organization was good, it could continue to function during a period when the normal chain of command had been disrupted. The Communists came to dominate the resistance movement in North China largely because they were able to provide the essential elements of effective organization, while, in most cases, forces under National Government leadership failed to do so.

Communist Leadership and Organizational Basis

The chief exponent of overall Communist military and political strategy was Mao Tse-tung, who had been engaged in insurgency operations since 1927 and had become the leader of the Chinese Communist Party in 1935. The commander in chief of the Communist forces was Chu Te, who had been Mao Tse-tung's close associate since 1928. Chu Te was older than the other Chinese Communist leaders and had become, to some extent, a figurehead by the early 1940's. The main direction of military operations was in the hands of P'eng Te-huai with Yeh Chien-ying as his chief of staff. Under them was a group of very able and experienced local commanders such as Lin Piao, Liu Po-ch'eng, Ho Lung, Hsü Hsiang-ch'ien, Nieh Jung-chen, Yeh T'ing and Ch'en Yi.

The Communist organization had a regional basis for both military and civil purposes. Most of these regions cut across the old provincial boundaries, a natural result of the wartime situation, when Japanese-held railway lines rather than natural features formed boundaries, and a mountain area formed a natural base area for insurgency. Below the region was the

chuan ch'u, which counted as a branch office of the regional government; the next basic unit of administration was the hsien, roughly equivalent to a county. Hsien varied in size and were usually somewhat smaller in North China (there were about 100 hsien in Hopei Province) than in South or West China. Each hsien had its own city, usually a walled town with a market, which formed the administrative center. Even when the hsien cities were occupied by the Japanese, the traditional area of the hsien usually remained as a unit for Communist administration. The hsien were divided into ch'u, which counted as branches of the hsien government, and the final basic unit of local government was the hsiang, or administrative village.

Communist and Non-Communist Organization Compared

The difference between the Communists' and the National Government's styles of organization was very well illustrated on the Hopei plain. South Hopei had been taken over by the Nationalist Gen. Lu Chung-lin, who had well-equipped forces and provided good administration on traditional lines. But when the Japanese offensive disrupted the normal chains of command in the spring of 1939, his position became untenable. He withdrew his forces into the mountains west of the Peiping-Hankow railway along the Hopei-Honan border and never got back into south Hopei. On the other hand, although the Japanese then attacked central Hopei and captured all the hsien cities after some heavy fighting, they failed to destroy or drive out the Communist forces under Gen. Lü Cheng-ts'ao, a regular army officer who had stayed behind to organize resistance forces. In the summer of 1942, however, a very heavy Japanese offensive compelled General Lü to withdraw, and central Hopei appeared to be pacified. A Japanese officer even reported that he was able to move about in the area unescorted. But a considerable part of the Communist organization had simply gone into hiding and at the beginning of 1943, when local Japanese pressure relaxed, the Communists merely moved back.

There were a few cases that showed that non-Communist insurgent forces could operate quite successfully when they were effectively organized. Yen Hsi-shan, a local warlord who had always operated with a good deal of independence, conducted a fairly effective insurgency operation in the southwest corner of Shansi Province; this depended on a type of organization highly irregular by National Government standards. Some National Government units in Shantung* maintained themselves until 1945, being finally eliminated, not by the Japanese, but by the Communists.³ In general, National Government authorities pressed for a uniformity that was not

*The writer interviewed some of these Shantung leaders later in Taiwan, and it is clear that their success depended on following a type of organization that was in many ways similar to that of the Communist forces. However, they complained that the National Government authorities at Chungking had never seemed to understand or appreciate what they were trying to do. It seems likely that the units in Shantung were effective largely because they were so completely cut off from the National Government that they could ignore directives which would have weakened their position.

always suitable for insurgency operations behind the Japanese lines. This appears to have resulted partly from pure bureaucratic incompetence, partly from an obsession with control and uniformity, and partly from distrust of local initiative. And the National Government became increasingly suspicious of irregular forms of organization when the United Front started to break down in 1939.

The simplest case of Communist insurgent organization was in Shansi-Chahar-Hopei, when complications with rival Nationalist forces were minimal. A conference of all anti-Japanese organizations met at Wut'ai at the beginning of January 1938 and agreed to set up a regional government known as the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei Border Region Government. The United Front between the Communists and the Kuomintang had just gone into effect and the new interprovincial government, including parts of all three provinces, was recognized as a provincial government.

An administrative committee was elected whose chairman, Sung Shao-wen, had been magistrate of Wut'ai hsien under Yen Hsi-shan, and two of his five colleagues were Kuomintang members. Local administration was restored, with features designed to win popular support. The system depended on elected councils at the village level. The more stable areas later elected hsien magistrates and councils, and, in 1942, elections were held for a Shansi-Chahar-Hopei congress, which met in January 1943. While these higher level elections tended to confirm candidates sponsored from above, the village-level elections seemed to be genuinely free and uncontrolled, with more candidates than seats. Ultimate power remained with the Communists; their 115th Division had been left in this area and they controlled the army. But the regional government, because its programs were patriotic and anti-Japanese, worked to a large extent through genuine cooperation.

Communist Land Policies

A land reform program* was begun, based on the National Government's Land Law of 1930. This land reform restricted rent to 37.5 percent of the main crop and had provisions to give the tenant security. It did not totally eliminate landlords; but, combined with the taxation system, it made landownership less profitable—thus encouraging landlords to sell out to their tenants and to put their money into trade or local industry, both of which the regional government wanted to encourage. This type of land reform significantly improved the condition of the peasants and provided incentives for increasing production, without destroying the landlords as a class. A Communist handbook for cadres working in the countryside explained why rents, if reduced to 37.5 percent of what they had been, could not be reduced to zero, a question which many peasant must have asked. The official answer was that landlords were needed in the United Front

*It was of the same general pattern as that carried out in Taiwan after 1949 and similar to the land reform in Japan when that country was under American occupation.

against Japan and that measures which made their economic situation intolerable would drive them to side with the Japanese.

Communist System of Taxation

Tax reform was as important as land reform, for the old taxation system was both inequitable and inefficient.⁴ Taking advantage of China's governmental instability, many landowners had managed to get plots of land removed from the tax register, and there was considerable slippage between what the taxpayer paid and what the government received in revenue.

The regional government of Shansi-Chahar-Hopei first replaced the old taxes with a rough-and-ready, but reasonably equitable, system said to have been originated by Yen Hsi-shan. Under this system, the higher authorities allotted what were considered to be equitable tax quotas to the areas under them and left individual assessments up to the village councils. This system was liable to abuse if a poor peasant group in some village followed a soak-the-rich policy or if some powerful gentry family retained control of the village council, but it was generally better than the old system. In well-organized regions, this system was later replaced by a regular income and property tax. The rates for 1941 would have required about 5 percent of the income of a fairly poor tenant family and about 45 percent of the income of a fairly well-to-do landlord family.* Without tax reform the costs of the anti-Japanese effort would have placed an intolerable burden on the population.

Taxes were levied mainly in kind, with millet the standard commodity of exchange, and the regional government's Supply Department coordinated the collection and distribution of grain. The village was responsible for delivering its tax quota to the nearest government supply depot. However, troops on the move were issued "grain tickets" (in multiples of half a day's rations) which they could exchange for grain in any village, and the village could submit these tickets to the government as part of its tax quota, thus saving transport costs. Consequently, food supplies were usually available to the insurgent army everywhere in the region through the regular tax system. Special arrangements became necessary only when a heavy concentration of troops in some poor area led to requirements exceeding the local tax quota. The Supply Department would then have to make arrangements for the excess demand to be refunded from government stocks in other areas. Since insurgent finance worked on a commodity basis, it was insulated from the effects of inflation. The various Communist regimes also issued their own local currencies, which depreciated in varying degrees—most of them less than National Government currency—but all salaries were reckoned in terms of grain, and for government or army operations money was only a subsidiary medium of exchange.

*The writer worked out some sample tax rates by applying the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei tax regulations to data given in J. Lossing Buck, Land Utilization in China (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938).

Regulation of Trade and Distribution of Supply

The Communist areas needed trade with the adjoining Japanese-held areas because they depended on the occupied cities for some manufactured goods they could not make themselves, including some items of great military importance such as radio parts and medical supplies. However, they tried to regulate the trade to minimize the export of commodities which had some strategic value to the Japanese, such as cotton, and to restrict or prohibit the import of luxury items, such as cigarettes, for which there were local substitutes.

Because of the vital importance of the Supply Department for the war effort, the most competent administrators were assigned to enforce strict accounting procedures. Nevertheless, the organization had some defects in the early years of the war. In 1939, for example, peasants complained that the grain to reimburse deliveries in excess of their tax quotas was only made available at inconveniently distant points. In the latter years of the war, however, the organization was remarkably efficient. A striking example of this efficiency occurred in the autumn of 1943, when the Japanese conducted an offensive against the main base area of Shansi-Chahar-Hopei lasting from mid-September to the end of December. As soon as the weather became cold, the Supply Department issued winter uniforms throughout the base area, although Japanese columns were moving about all over the area. The efficiency of this logistical system was undoubtedly a major factor in the success of the Communist forces.

Propaganda, Indoctrination, and Discipline

A great deal of effort was devoted to political propaganda and the development of mass organizations—peasant associations, women's groups, and youth leagues, for example. Local newspapers tried to keep up publication even during Japanese mopping-up campaigns, though they were sometimes reduced to small, smudgily printed single sheets. Within the insurgent army, great stress was laid on correct behavior toward the civilian population. For example, the writer witnessed one incident when troops were prepared to do without a meal rather than overrule a cantankerous old peasant woman who refused the loan of a cooking vessel. It was not considered a very serious offense if soldiers went AWOL when passing near their native village, but it was a very serious offense to seduce the daughter of a family on which troops were billeted, and such cases were very rare.

Some aspects of this propaganda work may have been carried to the point of being counter-productive. One area in southeast Shansi, which had changed hands between Japanese, Kuomintang, and Communists, had a local saying: "Japanese, too many killed; Kuomintang, too many taxes; Communists, too many meetings." The total effect, however, was to produce a great increase in national and political consciousness both in the insurgent army and among the peasants.

Although captured Japanese personnel were occasionally lynched by Chinese villagers, it was official Communist policy to treat prisoners favorably. They were often released to their

outfits after a short period of Communist indoctrination, or organized into a Japanese Communist front called the People's Emancipation League and used for propaganda work against the Japanese Army. Some of the more trusted Japanese prisoners were sent out at night with field telephones to cut in on the lines linking Japanese outposts and inform their former comrades of the good treatment they had received. Thus the Communists hurt Japanese morale by disproving the official line that prisoners of the Chinese were always killed.

Communists Consolidate Power in the North

The same general type of insurgent organization which developed in the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei interprovincial area gradually spread over most of the rest of North China, as the Communist Eighth Route Army was able to prevail over and drive out its Kuomintang rival.

Communist forces gradually incorporated the numerous, scattered local anti-Japanese forces into the regular Communist armies. This military consolidation involved a certain amount of deception and, in some cases, pressure. At the beginning of the war, local leaders were apt to be hesitant about joining Communist forces, and local forces which were actually under Communist control might not call themselves part of the Eighth Route Army. For example, it was not until the summer of 1938 that Lü Cheng-ts'ao's troops in central Hopei changed their name from the Hopei People's Self Defense Army to Eighth Route Army. However, in military as well as civil matters, the Communists were able to work very largely through voluntary cooperation. Consolidation offered obvious advantages to any local leader, as it brought to his unit skilled Communist instructors with 10 years' experience in guerrilla warfare. And there was obvious cogency in the argument that a unified command was essential for an effective anti-Japanese war effort.

After the Japanese became more active in the latter part of 1938, it was easy in a predominantly Communist area for the Communists to squeeze out any small local forces that refused to join their organization. If a small independent unit under Japanese attack moved into Communist areas, it immediately became dependent on the Communist organization for supplies. If it wanted to move back into its old area after Japanese pressure had relaxed, it might find that Communist forces had anticipated it. For example, in 1938 a Kuomintang unit under Chao Tung operated in the hills immediately west of Peiping. Under Japanese attack at the end of the year, Chao Tung moved his main force 200 miles or more to the south to make contact with the regular Kuomintang armies and re-equip his troops. The Communists permitted this move, but they then took over the area west of Peiping, and Chao Tung was killed in a clash with Communist forces when he tried, in 1939, to return to his original base area.

By the spring of 1938, the Communist 129th Division, which had originally been surrounded on three sides in southeast Shansi, had expanded its area of operations into the south Hopei plain; but Gen. Hsü Hsiang-ch'ien, the Communist commander, then moved his forces into Shantung and, in the summer of 1938, south Hopei was taken over by Kuomintang Gen. Lu Chung-lin,

who had been appointed governor of Hopei by the National Government. After 1940, however, south Hopei again became a Communist-held area. In south Shansi and north Honan, National Government armies operated, but after they were defeated by the Japanese in the summer of 1943, nearly all this area was organized under Communist leadership. In Shantung, insurgency against the Japanese was even more complicated by Communist-Kuomintang rivalry. It was probably not until 1943 that the Communist organization became the more powerful, and some National Government forces continued to operate into 1945.

Meanwhile, at the beginning of 1938, the 120th Division of the Eighth Route Army was based in northwest Shansi, a wild and heavily forested mountain country. This region was important to the Communists, since it lay between their original base area around Yen-an in north Shensi, which the Japanese never penetrated, and the new base areas further east, behind Japanese lines. In 1938, Communist forces in northwest Shansi were cooperating closely with warlord Yen Hsi-shan, Governor of the Province. With Communist assistance, Yen Hsi-shan organized a new army on the Communist model, the "Dare to Die Corps" (Chueh Sse Tui). When the United Front started to break down in 1939 this new army split up, a considerable part joining the Communists. Yen Hsi-shan's forces were soon expelled from northwest Shansi and confined to a base area in southwest Shansi, while the Communists took over northwest Shansi and expanded into part of Suiyuan.

Thus the spread of Communist-led insurgency over the whole of North China was a gradual process which was not substantially complete until the end of 1943. The history of Communist-Kuomintang rivalry in these operations is extremely complicated and controversial. Each side accused the other of responsibility for the long series of clashes which had started on a serious scale by the summer of 1939, and it was seldom that the rival versions agreed even on the date and exact location of fighting. Whatever the facts may be, the final result was the gradual fading out of non-Communist insurgency in North China, leaving the field of insurgent operations open to the more effective Communist partisans by the end of 1943. In the 1940-43 period of three-way fighting among Japanese, Chinese Communists, and Chinese Nationalists, the Nationalists were clearly proved to be the underdogs.

A Different Story in Central China

Communist forces in Central China were known as the New Fourth Army. Created from Communist elements left behind in South China when the main force of the Red Army undertook the Long March, the New Fourth Army was first designated in September 1937. However, some time was required to concentrate the small, scattered bands of Communist guerrillas from South China, and it was not until April 1938 that the New Fourth Army started operations with a force of about 12,000 in the lower Yangtze valley.

A major difference between the New Fourth Army in Central China and the Eighth Route Army in North China was that the former had no secure base areas. There were some hills with bamboo forests in northern Chekiang and southwestern Kiangsu, but these were much smaller and more easily penetrable than the mountain base areas of North China. The rest of the New Fourth Army's operational area in the lower Yangtze valley and north Kiangsu was open plain. The Central China guerrillas were never as secure as those of North China, where preparations for large-scale Japanese attacks on the insurgents' mountain base areas provided a week or more of advance warning.

On the other hand, Central China, though flat, was in some ways better suited for insurgency operations than the North China plain, because it was cut up by a very intricate network of waterways and irrigation canals. * Whereas there were comparatively few obstacles to Japanese movements over the North China plains and, except during the rainy season, almost every village could be reached by mechanized transport, many villages in the New Fourth Army's area could be reached only by boat or by footpaths over many small bridges. Under these conditions, the Japanese forces were less mobile than the Chinese. Small bridges could easily be destroyed, and the Chinese forces secured superior local mobility by constructing causeways a few feet below the surface of canals, so that they had many crossing points which an invading Japanese force could find only by chance. Insurgent organization could also be more open and more elaborate than that of the North China plains area because the Japanese could not stage fast attacks at any distance from their garrisons. The general situation in most parts of the New Fourth Army's operational area was thus intermediate between that of contested guerrilla territory and the securely held base areas in North China.

The United Front Breaks Down

The major problem faced by the New Fourth Army was conflict with National Government forces, skirmishes that were both more frequent and more serious than those in any of the Eighth Route Army areas. The main force of the New Fourth Army started operations in the lower Yangtze valley, while one detachment moved northward from Hankow. From the beginning, its areas were closely mixed with those of National Government forces or partisan units affiliated with the Kuomintang. Some clashes occurred as early as 1938, and these became more frequent and more serious during 1939 and 1940.

At the end of 1940 an attempt was made to demarcate zones of operations, and the New Fourth Army was ordered to move north of the Yangtze. A considerable part of the army did

* It was in this lower Yangtze valley area that Admiral Miles of the U. S. Navy and Gen. Tai Li of the Kuomintang Secret Service, working through the Sino-American Cooperation Organization (SACO), carried on their intelligence-gathering missions behind Japanese lines during much of the war.

move, but on January 4, 1941, a battle started in south Anhui between National Government forces and the headquarters unit of the New Fourth Army. In ten days of heavy fighting, the commander of the New Fourth Army was captured, and the vice-commander and the head of the political department were killed. The National Government then ordered the dissolution of the New Fourth Army for continual breaches of discipline. This south Anhui incident has sometimes been described as marking the breakdown of the United Front between Communists and Nationalists. In fact, this was by no means the first serious battle between Communist and National Government forces, but only the first which both sides decided to publicize.

After the south Anhui incident, the New Fourth Army was reorganized with Ch'en Yi (later Foreign Minister in the Peking regime) as commander and Liu Shao-ch'i (later President of the People's Republic of China) as political commissar. It consolidated its hold on north Kiangsu and proceeded to introduce there the type of governmental reorganization and mass organization that had been carried out earlier in the Communist areas of North China. It was not possible to go very far with such measures, however, until the New Fourth Army secured a considerable area in which it was the only Chinese force operating. While north Kiangsu became the main New Fourth Army area, new units also continued to operate south of the Yangtze and in some areas north of the river farther west in Anhui and Hupeh.

Strength and Organization of Communist Forces

The strength figures of the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies (excluding part-time village militia) were estimated as follows:⁵

	Eighth Route Army	New Fourth Army
1937	80,000	12,000
1938	156,000	25,000
1939	270,000	50,000
1940	400,000	100,000
1941	305,000	135,000
1942	340,000	110,000
1943	339,000	125,000
1944	507,000	252,000
1945	1,029,000	269,000

Comparison with other sources suggests that these figures refer to the end of each year, though that for 1945 may refer to V-J Day in August 1945. Communist casualties were heavy, but no precise figures have been published.

Apart from the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies, other Communist forces in South China operated against the Japanese in Kuangtung and on Hainan Island, but these were comparatively small-scale operations, involving about 4,500 insurgents in 1943 and 20,000 in 1945.⁶

The initial process of expansion and organization produced a rather complicated gradation in Communist army units. It was only in the early months of the fighting that the three-divisional

organization of the Eighth Route Army had any real meaning. A real distinction remained throughout the war between the Eighth Route Army in North China and the New Fourth Army in Central China, but within each area the effective organization was not by divisions but by regional commands. At the top were units with a high proportion of experienced soldiers from the former Red Army of prewar days. Then there were regular army units with a high proportion of recent local recruits, followed in turn by local forces associated with the army, hsien-level guerrilla organizations, and finally the part-time village militia organization which, in the early years of the war, was primarily concerned with police and intelligence duties.

After a few years, military organization became more homogeneous, the main distinction being that between the regular army and the village militia, though several types of special unit remained. There were plainclothes units (pien i tui), armed only with Mauser pistols and performing clandestine operations in Japanese-held territory; scouting companies and some front-line guerrilla units with rifles and light machineguns but wearing ordinary farmer's dress for disguise; and some special units formed from minority groups. The Eighth Route Army had some Korean units and also Muslim regiments and, in some cases, Roman Catholic regiments.

For a while some units experimented with wearing captured Japanese uniforms. On one occasion, an insurgent unit in Japanese uniform entered a village from one direction just as a Japanese unit was entering from another. Neither side discovered the situation until the units had become thoroughly mixed, and when fighting started, the Eighth Route Army unit had much the worst of it. This practice of wearing enemy clothing was soon discontinued.

Village Militia—Mine Warfare and Intelligence

After 1941 there were some important improvements in the equipment and training of the village militia, who were issued more rifles and were given more instruction in their use. As a result, in the latter years of the war small Japanese garrisons could be practically immobilized by the surrounding farm population, thus freeing Chinese regular troops for concentration in offensive operations.

The militia were mainly responsible for the development of mine warfare. The typical landmine was of fairly simple construction, fired by the same sort of mechanism as the regular wooden-handled handgrenade, through pulling a string. The usual firing device was a hole with a weak cover over which the soil was replaced so that treading on the spot would pull the string.

Landmines were one of the few weapons which could be produced in quantity locally, and the village militia were trained to mine the approaches and boobytrap their villages in the event of a Japanese attack. More permanent minefields were laid near Japanese forts. Good discipline was needed in these operations, since members of the local militia had to remain on hand to guide any Chinese troops who wanted to pass through the area, but the results did slow down Japanese movement and hinder Japanese activity considerably. For instance, in December

1943, the writer visited a village where a Chinese subdistrict headquarters was situated and was surprised to find it almost completely undamaged, although Japanese forces had been through the area and it was their usual policy to burn base area villages. Apparently the heavily mined outskirts of the city had dissuaded the Japanese from entering.

Landmine warfare developed into a contest of wits. When the Japanese compelled civilians to walk ahead of them, the Chinese developed mines with the firing device some 15 to 20 yards behind the mine, so that the mine would explode among the Japanese. When the Japanese sent out detector squads who marked the places where mines were buried, the militia observed their marks and duplicated them to show almost impenetrable mine fields.

The other main function of the militia was providing intelligence on Japanese movements and acting as guides to Chinese forces. In quiescent periods the chief of staff in a Chinese subdistrict headquarters would receive daily reports on all Japanese movements in his area. The Chinese also knew when garrisons were being increased or stocks of supplies built up. These reports, received from members of the militia organization near Japanese forts or from plainclothes agents deeper in Japanese-held territory, were sent to the nearest Chinese unit, which could radio them to local headquarters, or, if near the mountain base area, to the nearest point on the local telephone network.* It was almost impossible for the Japanese to attain surprise except in very small local raids. In the main Shansi-Chahar-Hopei base area, the insurgents almost always had several days' notice of even a small Japanese attack and several weeks' notice of a major mopping-up campaign.

Defensive Tactics

Warned of a major Japanese attack, both the underground organizations and the civilian population would hide all stocks of grain and everything not required for immediate use, and local arms factories would dismantle and hide their equipment. In central Hopei, the insurgents developed and perfected an underground escape network in a very literal sense. Beginning with underground shelters, where Chinese troops and officials could hide during Japanese attacks on villages, the insurgents later connected these shelters by a tunnel system within the village and eventually built longer tunnels linking several villages. This elaborate network of underground passages was facilitated by the condition of the subsoil in the central Hopei region, which was fairly easy to tunnel through and needed little timber support.

Thus, while the Japanese could burn the houses, they could do further damage only at the expense of great effort in searching the countryside for buried or hidden supplies. And once

*Although the telephone network was crude—its lines consisted of galvanized iron wire on wooden poles—and was strung through the wildest mountain country, away from any likely Japanese attack routes, it was, except in wet weather, fairly reliable over distances of 30 or 40 miles and could be used over longer distances for telegraphy.

Japanese forces had entered a Chinese base area they were kept under continuous observation by the militia organization, which used an elaborate system of couriers or simple visual signals to report on Japanese movements.

Shortages of Arms and Munitions

The Chinese Communist forces were unique among the resistance movements of World War II in receiving almost no outside supplies or assistance. They were always plagued by shortages of ammunition. Even the best units often had only about 100 cartridges per man, and this might have to last them several months. One subdistrict commander told this writer that his troops had a standing order that no one without a special marksman's qualification should open fire at over 200 yards. The chief source of supply was the Japanese themselves, but as time went on the Japanese took increasing trouble to prevent the capture of weapons. In any event, both Japanese arms and ammunition were needed, since Japanese ammunition did not fit Chinese rifles.

The Communist base areas managed to manufacture some rifle ammunition, stamping out the cartridge cases from old copper coins, but such production was small. The only items in reasonably adequate supply were handgrenades and landmines. The production of fireworks was a traditional craft in the Chinese countryside, and the Communist forces were using locally produced grenades filled with black powder as early as the spring of 1938. These were not very effective, but later Chinese technicians, who included some former professors of chemistry, managed to manufacture sulphuric acid—using the old lead-chamber process, with the large glazed earthenware jars (which farmers used for food storage) serving as the reaction vessels—and to make various nitro explosives. It was easy to cast handgrenades and landmines.

Shortages Limit Operations

Supply shortages had their effect on tactics. The insurgents' basic doctrine was expressed by Mao Tse-tung's slogan, "If you have no chance of victory, don't fight." The ammunition shortage made the Chinese insurgents reluctant to become involved in any major engagement unless they had a good chance of capturing at least as much ammunition as they would expend. The Communists therefore avoided positional battles in which their inferior firepower and shortage of ammunition placed them at a disadvantage and generally fought only when they were in a particularly favorable situation. Their preferred type of engagement was a night attack or ambush in which handgrenades were effective weapons. Another favorite tactic was to fight a delaying action against most of the Japanese line, while allowing a portion of the attacking Japanese force to penetrate insurgent lines to a point where it could be cut off and defeated.

A particularly useful tactic employed by the Communists was to neutralize the Chinese troops in Japanese service by offering them some sort of live-and-let-live agreement. As long as they did no fighting and behaved reasonably well to the population in the areas they

garrisoned, the Communist guerrillas would not attack them. One subdistrict commander in Shansi-Chahar-Hopei told this writer that his troops were not allowed to attack a puppet garrison without specific permission from headquarters. This policy paid off well for the insurgents by greatly reducing the effectiveness of the Japanese blockade-line system. The writer met a number of people who had made the difficult crossing from central Hopei to the mountain base in west Hopei across the Peiping-Hankow railway. They often reported that, although they had passed within range of forts, there had been no firing. It was also reported that, even when there had been some firing, a peasant would come the next morning with a message from the puppet garrison explaining that it had been necessary to fire because there were Japanese present and expressing the hope that no one had been hit.

A Communist Military Blunder

In the summer of 1940, Communist forces staged a major offensive in North China, called the HUNDRED REGIMENT Campaign. This attack put the Shihchiachuang-Taiyuan railway out of action for a week or two, captured some Japanese-operated coal mines, and destroyed many Japanese forts. Nevertheless, after the offensive, many Communist officers considered it to have been a military mistake. Casualties were heavy, reserves of ammunition were used up, and the gains were purely temporary. Within about two months the Japanese had recovered all their former positions and rebuilt and strengthened their forts to resist any similar future attacks.

The real motives for this offensive were probably political rather than military. With the Kuomintang charging that the Communists had ceased to fight the Japanese, the Communist campaign was a clear refutation of these charges. Also, Wang Ching-wei, head of a new Japanese puppet government at Nanking, was appealing to his former Kuomintang colleagues at Chungking to give up the hopeless struggle and save their country by accepting the "reasonable" conditions which the Japanese were prepared to offer. With prospects for continued Chinese resistance bleak at this time, the Communist leaders may well have concluded that even a temporary Chinese success against the Japanese would stiffen Chinese opinion against any compromise peace.

There were no more sustained offensive operations by the insurgents in North China until the last year of the war. By this time, however, the Japanese forces were weaker. There was a better chance of capturing stocks of ammunition, and, except along the railways, areas recovered from the Japanese could usually be held by the insurgents.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

The Japanese Army came to China from a background of successful counterinsurgency: first in Taiwan, which Japan had wrested from the Chinese in 1895, then in Korea after 1905;

and more recently in Manchuria, which it has occupied in 1931-32. After defeating the armies of Manchurian warlord Chang Hsüeh-liang, the Japanese had effectively suppressed the remnants of these forces, as well as the small guerrilla bands organized by the local gentry. By a combination of military pressure and political concessions, the Japanese were eventually able to induce many of the Manchurian insurgent leaders to surrender.

Defended-Village Strategy in Manchuria

After the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, there was a recrudescence of Manchurian insurgency, which reached its peak in 1938. In some areas this was under Communist leadership. The Japanese reacted with a defended-village strategy, moving the population of insurgent areas into large villages which were then fortified and garrisoned with Japanese units of 30 or 40 men. Outside these villages all houses were destroyed.

This strategy was effective. It denied to the insurgents both supplies and shelter, without which the severe Manchurian winter climate made it almost impossible to survive. Also, conditions in Manchuria were such that a Japanese garrison of 30 to 40 men in a fortified village could hold out against any forces the insurgents could mass, at least long enough for reinforcements to arrive. Manchuria's fairly good communications network gave the counterinsurgents an advantage in this regard. Thus this simple defended-village strategy worked because it denied support to the insurgents and because it was carried out at a time when the insurgent forces were comparatively weak.

Japanese counterinsurgency strategy in Manchuria made considerable demands on manpower, since effective local defense required reliable garrisons, either made up of Japanese troops or containing a stiffening contingent of Japanese personnel. But the application of this strategy at a time when the Japanese Army in Manchuria was strong made it possible to prevent the subsequent development of any active resistance movement there, even after the occupation force had been weakened in the later years of the war. In the case of Japanese-occupied China, there was seldom such early and concentrated massing of Japanese troop strength as in Manchuria. Japanese counterinsurgency efforts in China were almost always characterized by being too little and too late.

War With China Catches the Japanese Unprepared

It appears that the Japanese Army did not anticipate major hostilities in China in the summer of 1937. Although the Japanese had deliberately staged an incident in 1931 as a pretext for the conquest of Manchuria, they were caught by surprise in 1937 and attempted to secure a settlement of the original fighting around Peiping. They apparently preferred to continue the gradual extension of their influence in North China, which had been going on since 1931, and would have ended hostilities if some further Chinese concessions had enabled the Japanese Army to

save face. But the Chinese National Government was not prepared in 1937 to accept any further erosion of its control in North China. General war was inevitable when Chiang Kai-shek ordered Nationalist divisions into Hopei.

Confronted unexpectedly with general, though undeclared, warfare in China, the Japanese found themselves short of troops ready for immediate action. The army had to choose between establishing complete control over North China and acting to defeat the Chinese Nationalist Army in Central and South China. Choosing the latter alternative, the Japanese could spare only one division to guard their main communication lines in the north and had no forces available for counter guerrilla operations in the countryside. Although they made a few raids into areas where insurgent organization was developing, for the most part the Japanese contented themselves with holding the towns along the railways.

Problems in Creating a Puppet Regime

Furthermore, the Japanese were not able to persuade Chinese leaders of any standing to work for them in North China. They made great efforts to win over Wu Pei-fu, one of the more respectable warlords, who had been living in retirement in Peiping since his defeat by the Kuomintang in 1926-27, but without success. The actual ministers of the Japanese-sponsored North China Provisional Government were old men whose previous careers had been in the less reputable warlord regimes or the imperial regime before 1911, and even these men had no great liking for the Japanese who had given them a new opportunity in political life. A puppet minister remarked on one occasion to Dr. Leighton Stuart, President of Yenching University, that the Nationalists in Chungking did not really understand what anti-Japanese feeling was, they did not have to try to work with the Japanese. The poor attitudes of the Chinese in Japanese service, who were generally negligent and hesitant to take any personal risks in their perfunctory compliance with occupation duties, were an important factor in the Japanese failure to meet the challenge of Chinese insurgency in North China.

Japanese Fail to Consolidate Position or to React to Insurgency

Thus, over large parts of North China the Communists had nearly a year in which to build up their organization, practically undisturbed by the Japanese. This period was almost ideal for insurgent training, with real but not too serious military operations in the form of raids on Japanese-held railways and defensive actions against the occasional small-scale raids which the Japanese made into the countryside. In the spring of 1938, one could bicycle out into the countryside from Japanese-held railroad towns, passing the last Japanese sentries a few miles from the railway, and several miles farther out meeting the first Chinese sentries. There in the countryside one beheld a scene of great activity, as the Chinese Communists drilled troops, held mass meetings, and organized the population for war.

In 1938 the Japanese-controlled press in Peiping tried to minimize the importance of insurgency in the countryside, arguing that the problem was merely one of banditry which could easily be cleared up. Somewhat later, with the advantage of hindsight, General (Count) Terauchi remarked at a press conference in Peiping that the Communists were like "bedbugs," in that, once a place was allowed to become infested with them, it was almost impossible to get rid of the problem. By delaying large-scale antiguerrilla operations until the latter part of 1938, the Japanese forfeited the advantages which an early and vigorous antiinsurgent campaign of the Manchurian variety might have produced.

First Antiguerrilla Operations

The first major effort occurred in July 1938, in response to a Communist-provoked general uprising in the strategic east Hopei region between Peiping, Tientsin, and the Manchukuo border. About 20,000 Japanese troops were employed in east Hopei, and within a few weeks all Chinese resistance had been effectively crushed. This campaign was followed by very strict control measures, such as registration of all the population and frequent surprise raids on villages to ferret out Communist underground agents.

The next phase of Japanese counterinsurgency began in October 1938 and continued throughout 1939. Following conventional military strategy, the Japanese Army sought in this period to bring the insurgents to battle. The typical Japanese offensive tactic involved an attack by several columns converging from different directions, with the objective of encircling the guerrillas. In doing this, however, the Japanese often fell victim to a Chinese countertactic of surrounding deeply penetrating columns. In some of these local operations, Japanese losses were fairly heavy and even included a lieutenant general who was himself surrounded when he led a force to relieve a cut-off column.

Japanese Strength and Deployment in 1939

Having defeated the Nationalist forces at Canton and in the Wuhan area (central Yangtze valley), the Japanese transferred the 27th, 10th, and 5th Divisions to North China for anti-guerrilla operations. By the beginning of 1939, the total strength of the Japanese Army in China was around 1 million men—with 11 divisions, 4 mixed brigades, and 1 cavalry brigade deployed in the North China theater; 10 divisions and 1 cavalry brigade in Central China; and 2 divisions and 1 detachment in South China, as well as various communications units throughout China. By September 1939, these forces in North China had been increased to 11 divisions, 11 mixed brigades, 1 cavalry brigade, and 1 cavalry group.⁶

The Campaigns of 1939 Prove Indecisive

The campaigns in the latter part of 1938 had penetrated the main insurgent areas and captured a number of hsien cities, but this did not prevent the continued growth of insurgency.

Even in the few cases where insurgent forces had been destroyed, Japanese gains were only temporary. For example, in western Shantung a local leader affiliated with the Communists was killed and his forces dispersed, but by the spring of 1939 new Communist forces had moved in and reorganized the area.⁹

Large-scale fighting was resumed in the spring of 1939 with attacks on almost all the main insurgent areas in North China. These scored some successes, for example, against Lu Chung-lin's forces in south Hopei. But this was a case in which the Chinese force was not very well organized and was operating in the North China plain, difficult terrain for insurgent operations. When the Japanese then shifted their attack to central Hopei, also a plains area, where Gen. Lü Cheng-ts'ao was assisted by the Communist field army under Gen. Ho Lung, the counterinsurgents had little success. They captured all the hsien cities, but the Communist forces remained in control of the countryside. The campaigns in mountain areas enjoyed even less success. In southeast Shansi, both Communist and Nationalist forces recovered most of their original positions within a month after the end of the eastern Shansi Province operation of July-September 1939.¹⁰

After more than a year's campaigning, the Japanese, at the end of 1939, held many more points in North China than they had in 1938, but both the Communist forces and the population under insurgent control had continued to increase. The Japanese North China Area Army estimated Communist forces to contain nearly 140,000 regular troops and 110,000 full-time guerrillas, as well as over half a million Chinese in the village militia organization.¹¹ Communist strength in North China continued to expand in 1940.

A New Strategy—"Silkworm Nibbling"

Confronted by this development, the Japanese shifted to a new counterinsurgency strategy which, by the end of that year, was to prove increasingly effective. The originator of the new strategy was said to be a General Kuwaki, commander of the 110th Division, which had been in North China since the beginning of the war. It was based on a study of the campaigns of the Chinese National Government against the Communist insurgency in South China in the early 1930's and followed the same principle of cutting down the insurgent base areas by a system of forts and blockade lines. This system, first begun in 1939 as a defensive measure along the railways, was adapted and developed as an offensive measure.

The basic plan was to work out gradually from the areas under full Japanese control by building a line of forts connected, where possible, by a system of blockade ditches or fences; then to consolidate control of the territory behind this line; and finally to start another line farther out, still further encroaching on the Chinese base area. A Japanese term for this strategy was "silkworm nibbling," the analogy being the gradual eating away of a mulberry leaf by the seemingly insignificant silkworm.

The forts, in their final form, were brick or stone structures three or four stories high, with roofs strong enough to resist a number of small mortar shells, and surrounded by ditches or wire entanglements. The insurgents could harass the Japanese while a fort was being built, but once it had been built and garrisoned, it was extremely costly to take, since the Chinese had no artillery and only a few small mortars. The normal strength of a Japanese garrison ranged from a squad to a platoon (20 to 30 men) in a fort, 2 squads to a platoon in a village, and 1 or 2 companies in a town.

Some 30,000 such forts were built. Connecting the forts, the Japanese also constructed about 60,000 miles of blockade ditches, usually about 10 feet deep and 10 to 20 feet wide to jump across. Fences played a lesser part except in the area around Hsuehchow on the Shantung-Kiangsu border, where there were about 4,200 miles of electrified wire fence. Elsewhere there were about 3,600 miles of wattle fence. * Some areas near the fortification lines were declared to be "uninhabited territory," in which Japanese patrols would shoot anyone on sight.

As a result of this strategy, North China was divided after 1940 into three fairly sharply defined types of territory. At one extreme were areas under consolidated Japanese control; at the other were areas controlled by the guerrillas; and in between were disputed zones.

Population and Resources Control in Consolidated Areas

In areas under Japanese control, there was complete registration of the population, with all residents required to carry identification cards, which in the Peiping area—and possibly elsewhere—included photographs. Numerous checkpoints were set up and frequent surprise raids were instituted to catch anyone who did not have proper identification papers.

Control was further enforced by a block-warden system called pao-chia, through which the population was organized into residential groups whose members were held mutually responsible for any anti-Japanese activities in their areas. Ten families who lived nearby were organized into a pao, and five of these groups made up a tai-pao. The Japanese appointed some influential or respected Chinese to be in charge of the tai-pao, and he in turn appointed other Chinese to take charge of each pao. These Chinese leaders were held personally responsible for the behavior of the population in their jurisdictions. In addition, because of mutual responsibility under the pao-chai system, any open activity such as a public anti-Japanese meeting or an overt act of sabotage placed many people in jeopardy.

This system was never entirely effective, partly because many of the Chinese in Japanese service continued to help the insurgents when they could do so without risk to themselves, and

* In the summer of 1954 the outlines of this fort-and-blockade-line system on the North China plain could still be traced from the air. As aerial photography in England has revealed earthworks dating back to Anglo-Saxon and even to Roman times, this Japanese system could still probably be mapped from aerial photographs taken at the right period in the growing season and may remain visible in this form for centuries.

partly because some of the Japanese in the system were corrupt. Nevertheless, if it did not completely eliminate insurgent agents from the consolidated Japanese areas, it at least limited them to such inconspicuous activities as gathering intelligence, smuggling supplies to the insurgent base areas, and carrying on undercover propaganda work.

Even consolidated areas were never totally impenetrable to insurgent forces. A Chinese force could move through such territory if it was strong enough to keep local garrisons pinned down in their forts, or if it carried equipment to get across blockade ditches and moved fast enough to avoid a concentrated Japanese attack. Throughout the war Chinese forces continued to move across even the very heavily defended Peiping-Hankow railway; but by 1942 the crossing involved a night march of 30 miles or more, some risk of casualties from long-range fire from the forts, and the danger of serious losses if the Japanese opposed the crossing. Had the Japanese widened these strips of controlled territory to a point where they could not be traversed at night, the insurgents would have been severely handicapped. It would also have been much more difficult for the insurgents if the Japanese forts had been entirely manned by Japanese troops. In fact, many of them were garrisoned by puppet Chinese troops, who did as little fighting as possible.

Control in Disputed and Communist-held Areas

Outside the areas under strict Japanese control there was a twilight zone in which the Japanese maintained a number of forts and outposts but in which the guerrillas successfully rivalled the occupation forces in actual control of the area. In this zone there was almost incessant fighting, though most of the engagements were on a very small scale. When Japanese losses of ammunition to guerrilla raiders in the twilight zone mounted, they reacted by concentrating their stocks in the more secure consolidated areas and doled out limited amounts to the more remote outposts. The Japanese were trying to eliminate insurgent forces from the area, while the Chinese guerrillas were anxious to prevent the Japanese from organizing the population under their control. The struggle became especially intense around harvesttime, when the Japanese tried to compel the villagers to store their grain in Japanese-garrisoned areas, while the insurgents tried to protect the peasants so that they could hide the grain from the Japanese and pay "taxes" to the underground organization.

As for the Communist base areas in mountain territory, the Japanese sometimes succeeded in dividing up these areas by lines of forts, but in the mountains the forts could not be connected by blockade ditches and the lines remained fairly easy to cross. By the end of the war there were very few places, even in remote mountain areas, which the Japanese had not at some time penetrated. But an attack on a mountain base area required a fairly large number of troops and the necessary buildup of supplies was too costly to maintain for more than a month or two. The buildup also provided advance warning of the Japanese attack.

The Japanese Take the Offensive in 1940

The intensity of Japanese efforts against insurgency in North China increased markedly after the Communist HUNDRED REGIMENT Campaign in the summer of 1940. Informants connected with the intelligence and planning staff of the Japanese Army in North China have confirmed the views of some Chinese Communist officers to the effect that this Communist offensive was a military mistake, from the insurgent point of view. According to these Japanese sources, the campaign alerted the entire Japanese Army to the growing strength of Communist forces in North China. Understandably, field officers who had conducted a number of campaigns trying to encircle forces which usually managed to avoid serious combat were inclined to doubt that the Communist armies constituted a serious danger—a conclusion reinforced by their reluctance to leave the comparative comfort of garrison duty in the towns for the discomforts of campaigning in wild and primitive mountain territory. These doubts were quickly set aside by the Communist campaign, which convinced everyone that serious efforts were necessary to eliminate the insurgents.

The "Three All" Strategy Against Communist Base Areas

From the end of 1940, the Japanese not only pushed ahead with their fort-and blockade-line strategy but also conducted a series of offensives against the insurgents' mountain base areas. The main objective of these offensives was not as previously, to bring the insurgent forces to combat, but rather to destroy the basis for their support. In areas in which the Japanese did not feel able to consolidate their control, the army followed the "Three All" strategy—"Kill all, Burn all, Destroy all." The Japanese killed all the animals, burned the villages, and destroyed crops and any stocks of foodstuffs they could find. "Kill all" was not applied quite literally to the human population, though very large numbers of people were killed and many others deported for labor in Manchuria. A Japanese source reported that during a campaign between August and October 1941 against a major mountain base area 150,000 houses were burned, 4,500 persons killed, and 17,000 deported to Manchuria.¹²

The "Three All" strategy against the Communist base areas had its limitations. It was not possible to carry out complete destruction in these large areas of very wild mountain country in which the Chinese forces were strong enough to wipe out any small Japanese forces which ventured too far from possible reinforcements. In these areas the Chinese organization made sure that most equipment and stocks of grain had been carefully hidden well before the Japanese attack, and the guerrillas' short-range warning system enabled most of the local population to scatter in the mountains whenever the Japanese approached their village. Also the development of landmines and the improvement in the village militia hampered the Japanese in their attempts to make a thorough search for all supplies or to penetrate all the remote side valleys in which the local population built shelters when their home villages had been burned.

In these operations the Japanese were always handicapped by faulty intelligence: they were forced to operate largely in the dark, since their information about the Chinese base areas was usually quite unreliable. The writer once saw a Japanese map which had been prepared for a major offensive against the Pei-yao base in the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei region; although it was dated about two weeks before the start of the offensive, it showed such important objectives as Gen. Nieh Jung-chen's headquarters, the regional government's headquarters, and munitions factories nearly all incorrectly located. The insurgent general's headquarters was shown as being in a village from which it had been moved several months before. Another instance of poor Japanese intelligence was indicated by the successful insurgent meeting in January 1943 of the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei Congress only 20 or 30 miles from a Japanese garrison. A large meeting hall had been specially constructed for the occasion, but it was not until April that the Japanese bombed this new building.

The North China Situation After Three Years of Operations

The attacks on the Communist base areas in North China were combined with offensives against the National Government forces remaining there. These Nationalist forces were generally less well organized than the Communists; and by the latter part of 1943 most Nationalist units north of the Lung-Hai railway in Shantung had been dispersed, forced to withdraw, or forced to surrender and to take service under the Japanese-sponsored Nanking government in Central China. In many cases, Japanese offensives actually aided the Communists by allowing them to take over the former Nationalist base areas.

Despite their failure to eliminate the Communist bases, the Japanese gained in North China between 1941 and the end of 1943. Through the fort-and-blockade-line system the areas under effective Japanese control were expanded and the insurgent forces were denied the produce of many of the more fertile areas. The more mountainous parts of the base areas had always been poor and, while the reformist land policy which the Communists followed in this period increased production, it was only in comparatively undisturbed areas that this outweighed the damage done by the "Three All" strategy. The Communists, in fact, admitted that during this period the population under their control fell from about 60 million to 40 million, while the strength of the Eighth Route Army, which had reached 400,000 in 1940, fell to 305,000 at the end of 1941 and was only 339,000 at the end of 1943. At one period in 1943 the Communists held only one small hsien city in the whole of North China, and they were able to retake only a few by the spring of 1944.

Although the Japanese strategy of the period from 1941 to 1943 attained considerable success, it made very heavy demands on Japanese manpower. To meet these demands, the Japanese used large numbers of Chinese troops. According to Chu Jui, the chief political officer of Hsü Hsiang-chen's Communist forces in Shantung, there were about 400,000 puppet troops in

the Shantung area alone. The best of these, from the Japanese point of view, were troops which had received strong anti-Communist indoctrination as part of the Nationalist Army and had then joined the Japanese-sponsored Nanking government's forces after surrendering. But even they were not very good, and the locally recruited puppet forces did as little fighting as possible.

Thus, the counterinsurgency effort was effective only so long as the forces included a fairly high proportion of Japanese units. By 1943, however, good Japanese units were being transferred to the Pacific theater and, at the beginning of 1944, many Japanese troops were shifted to Central and South China for offensives against regular forces there. With this reduction in troop strength, the whole counterinsurgency program in North China began to collapse. Simultaneously, both the Communist-held areas and Communist forces started to expand. As against one hsien city held at the end of 1943, the Communists held more than 40 at the end of 1944, and the Communist army in North China increased from 339,000 to 507,000. The growth of insurgency and the rate of Japanese collapse accelerated in 1945: by that spring, the Japanese were not only losing their control of the countryside but also of such major centers of the North China plains as Taming in south Hopei. In the months before VJ-Day (August 14, 1945), Japanese control was shrinking rapidly toward the railway lines and the Chinese troops in their service were starting to defect to the Communists.

Better Results in the Central Theater

Japanese strategy in Central China followed rather different lines from that in North China. The latter was an area that the Japanese Army had long wanted to invest and control, but the main objective of military operations in Central China was not to conquer but to apply pressure to the Chinese National Government. What the Japanese Army wanted in Central China was not direct military control but a Chinese government politically friendly to Japan. Moreover, the Central China Command of the Japanese Army was largely separate from the North China Command, and relations between the two were often strained.

The situation in Central China was also very different from that in the North. The Japanese Army in Central China was opposed by the much stronger regular forces of the Chinese Nationalists and was much more occupied with military operations against them. While parts of the regular front became static after 1938, the Japanese continued to conduct a series of attacks in Hunan and Hupoh, and a Japanese offensive in 1942 eliminated the American airbases in Chekiang. Although Chinese regular forces were stronger, the Chinese insurgent organization was far weaker in Central China than in North China until the latter years of the war. Chinese Nationalists and Communist guerrillas spent a good deal of effort fighting one another and, until the New Fourth Army started to build up the north Kiangsu area, the Central China countryside was poorly organized by the insurgents.

The Japanese in Central China, furthermore, had striking success in finding Chinese collaborators. With the establishment of the Nanking government of Wang Ching-wei in 1940, the

Japanese acquired more effective Chinese collaborators than in North China.¹³ Of the various Chinese puppet regimes which the Japanese Army set up in China, the so-called Central Government, headed by Wang Ching-wei and based in Nanking, was the most successful venture. It was also the one most independent of Japanese control. A political rival of Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Ching-wei had been an important leader since the early days of the Kuomintang and had held various high posts in the Chinese National Government. He fled from Chungking to Indochina in 1939 and, after lengthy negotiations with the Japanese, returned and set up a rival Chinese government in 1940.

It was not until 1940 that the Japanese Army in Central China started counterinsurgency operations on a large scale, and in these it suffered some serious losses at the hands of both Nationalist and Communist forces. Though some insurgent forces were eliminated, insurgency reappeared in most areas soon after the Japanese mopping-up campaign. The Japanese forces in Central China did not try anything like the "Three All" strategy in North China partly, no doubt, because there were no definite mountain base areas.

Model Peace Zones

In July 1941, the Japanese developed a Rural Pacification Movement, which worked through the establishment of Model Peace Zones. The first stage in such a zone was a Japanese campaign to eliminate the local insurgent forces. Then Japanese forces were reduced to a few local garrisons and the zone was handed over to officials of the Nanking (Wang Ching-wei) government who were responsible for restoring local government, building up a local militia system, securing the complete registration of the population, and setting up an effectively functioning pao-chia system. The pao-chia system and the village militia made it hard for insurgents to penetrate and organize the villages, and the restoration of normal government with some measures of reform offered the local population tolerable conditions under Japanese occupation. Although the Communists conducted a vigorous propaganda campaign against the Model Peace Zones and tried to disrupt population registration and the pao-chia system, they had only limited success.

The first Model Peace Zone was developed in the Shanghai-Nanking-Hangchow triangle. It succeeded not only in greatly reduced local insurgency but also in securing a considerable increase in agricultural production, to the benefit of both the countryside and the cities.¹⁴ Two more Model Peace Zones were set up in 1942, one on the Kiangsu-Chekiang border and the other on the outskirts of Shanghai, and no less than seven were established during 1943. Further expansion was attempted in 1944, but with less success, because by this time it had become generally clear that Japan was losing the larger Pacific War and people were less willing to cooperate with the Japanese-sponsored government of Wang Ching-wei.

Japanese Behavior Negates Their Overall Effort

More than anything else, the lack of discipline in the army nullified Japanese counterinsurgency efforts throughout China. Japanese propaganda made a special effort to win over certain key elements of the Chinese population. It tried to appeal to the conservative gentry class by stressing Confucianism, and to Buddhists by stressing the common religious heritage of both China and Japan. But conservative landlords who had begun by taking these appeals seriously often ended by moving into the Communist-controlled areas. They had found that, although some Japanese Army units respected official policy and gave reasonable treatment to gentry families who did not oppose them, many others made more and more extortionate demands or raped their womenfolk. Widespread corruption in the Japanese Army not only decreased efficiency but led to bribetaking and traffic with the enemy.*

Some Japanese officers realized the seriousness of this failure to maintain discipline. In 1939, Communist forces captured a Japanese headquarters and found among its documents a report of a speech by General Kuwaki, commander of the 110th Division, to his officers. In this he stated that the Japanese would lose the war in China unless they were able greatly to improve their discipline toward the civilian population.

A large part of the army's discipline problem stemmed from the Kempetai, a gestapo-type organization which combined the functions of military police with those of political secret police. The Kempetai was extremely powerful both in Tokyo and overseas, and it was hard for any officer outside the organization to control it, whatever his rank. Also, it had become extremely corrupt in China, where it was involved in the drug traffic; in fact, the Kempetai had become, to a considerable extent, a racketeering organization using its vast powers to extort money or to force Chinese to sell their property at low prices. It was obviously difficult to raise the standards of army discipline when the organization with special responsibility for this was itself in serious need of reform.

Irreversibility of Moral Decline

The Kempetai, however, was only a symptom of a more deep-seated malaise in the Japanese military system. The decline of standards in the Japanese Army can be largely explained in terms of the generalization that people in a false position almost always behave badly; or, to put it another way, skeletons in the cupboard inhibit housecleaning. In the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) the Japanese Army could feel with some justification that it was fighting to free Asia from Western imperialism; and, at this period, members of such patriotic organizations as the

* For example, in 1941, the writer was asked to get an important Chinese agent through the Japanese controls at the city gates at Peiping; the Communist underground already had contacts with a corrupt Japanese officer who would issue a regular resident's pass to the agent once he got into the city.

Black Dragon Society seem to have genuinely believed in Pan-Asianism based on mutual cooperation. Many of them supported Sun Yat-sen's efforts in China. By the 1930's, though the theorists of the Japanese Army still talked of freeing Asia from Western imperialism and of developing the Great East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, the army's practical objectives had now become not Asian cooperation but Japanese hegemony, and not general Asian prosperity but exclusive Japanese exploitation. A great many people with considerable power in the Japanese Army and Government had a strong vested interest against any change in the system. Such interest was rationalized by growing belief in a mystical racialism--according to which the Japanese, descended from the Sun Goddess, were superior to the rest of mankind and had a divine mission to rule the world.

Moreover, although the extreme militarists who ruled Japan at this time always claimed that absolute loyalty to the emperor was the basis of their faith, their actions betrayed their real motivations. They were continually disloyal to Emperor Hirohito, who had tried to prevent the seizure of Manchuria in 1931 and at one point had seriously considered issuing an imperial rescript denouncing the army. If the leaders of the Japanese Army had ever admitted the extent of the gap between what they claimed to be doing and what they were actually doing, they could not have retained any self-respect. The natural result in this situation was an emotionally charged and steadfast refusal to start a process which would have revealed this contradiction by explicitly admitting that there was something seriously wrong with the Japanese Army.

The normal reaction of almost everyone in the system was to cover up or deny any shortcomings rather than to admit and correct them. When foreign correspondents in North China raised instances of Japanese atrocities or bad discipline, the usual reaction of army spokesmen was to deny the allegation "on principle," on the grounds that such behavior by the Japanese Army was impossible because it would be contrary to imperial policies on army discipline.* The total effect of all this was greatly to reduce the efficiency of Japanese counterinsurgency operations in China.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

In both North and Central China, Japanese counterinsurgency began to fade out in 1944 through the general weakening of Japan's position in the Pacific war. It officially ended with

*The writer found an interestingly similar reaction from the Chinese Communists when he visited Peking in 1949. When he argued that there was very little to choose between the Kerm-petai and the Russian NKVD and supported this argument by instances of Russian behavior in Berlin, the reaction from a number of Chinese Communists was to say, "But Mr. Lindsay, you ought to know that the stories you have told of Russian behavior cannot be true because it is theoretically impossible for the representatives of a Socialist power to behave in the ways you have described."

the Japanese surrender to Allied forces in August 1945, though fairly large Japanese forces remained in China and cooperated with the Chinese National Government against the Communists into 1946. Indeed, the last Japanese units fighting in China were eliminated only when the Communists captured Taiyuan in 1949.

In analyzing Japanese counterinsurgency, it may be well to review their qualified success in Manchuria as a basis for comparison of their action in China proper. In Manchuria, open insurgency was completely eliminated, except for one small force on the Soviet border and a later spread of insurgent activities across the border from China proper. The pacification was accomplished at the outset and was maintained even after Japanese forces in Manchuria had been greatly weakened in the latter period of the war. It is not clear, however, whether a point would ever have been reached at which the Japanese could have handed over the task of maintaining internal order to local Manchukuo forces alone, or whether a fair number of Japanese garrisons would have been necessary for the indefinite future. The rapidity with which open Communist organization was able to develop after the Japanese surrender in 1945 suggests that a good deal of underground Communist organization had survived as a potential threat. The determining factor for the long run would probably have been whether the Manchukuo regime could win popular tolerance and some measure of real support.

Some Lessons of Japanese Counterinsurgency

The Manchurian case sheds light on a number of important generalizations about counterinsurgency. First, it shows that counterinsurgency is much easier and more effective when it is started very early, before the insurgent forces have had time to develop. Second, it shows the conditions under which a defended-village strategy can be effective. In Manchuria there was no need to reinforce the defended villages by a fort-and-blockade-line strategy: insurgent forces were so small that a village with a Japanese garrison of some 30 men was defensible. Also, the Japanese realized that the whole point of the defended-village strategy was to deny resources to the insurgents, and in this regard the counterinsurgents had a powerful ally in the harsh Manchurian winter climate, which made life in the open country virtually impossible.

In North China, the Japanese wasted the early years with regard to counterinsurgency; in fact, they did not evolve an effective counterinsurgent strategy until late 1940. Their gains during the next three years illustrated how much could be accomplished by purely military means, in spite of a late start and complete political failure. In the 1940's, the Japanese faced an extremely strong insurgent movement with a well-organized base of mass support under very able Communist leadership. The insurgents enjoyed a major advantage in that their civilian administration was carrying out reformist rather than doctrinaire Communist policies, and these measures really benefited the peasants and won the support of able and intelligent non-Communists as well. As a result, the Chinese Communist insurgency was able to work much more

through voluntary cooperation and much less through terrorism than subsequent Communist-led insurgencies, with important gains in efficiency. Moreover, while the Communists enjoyed much genuine popular approval, the Japanese faced almost universal popular hostility, which their behavior did little or nothing to allay. If the Japanese Army had maintained high standards of discipline and if the defeat of the Chinese National armies had been followed up by the establishment of efficient governments, then the Japanese might have won at least tolerance and perhaps some support from the majority of the population.

In spite of these very serious handicaps, the Japanese were gaining in North China during the three years after 1940. Partly, this military effectiveness was the result of sheer ruthlessness, as in the "Three All" attempts to devastate the Communist base areas. Partly, it was the result of the fort-and blockade-line strategy, which the Communists had no effective means of countering, so long as the Japanese had enough troops to maintain it. Partly, it was the result of good organization: Japanese methods of transporting and storing ammunition made it hard for the insurgents to capture appreciable quantities.

Though Japanese counterinsurgency in North China was ultimately a failure, sources connected with the Japanese Army argue that it would have succeeded if the worsening course of the war in other areas had not compelled the withdrawal of Japanese troops from North China. This is, of course, a hypothetical issue, but the available information does make it possible to make a reasonable estimate. If the Japanese had been able to continue their efforts on the scale of the period from 1941 to 1943, it is possible that the weakening of the insurgent forces might have become cumulative. With further losses as the area under full Japanese control expanded and as their base areas were increasingly devastated, the insurgent forces would have shrunk and become less able to resist still further Japanese expansion. As was pointed out earlier, if the strips of territory along the railway lines under full Japanese control had widened so that they could not have been crossed in a single night's march, the different patches of insurgent territory would have been effectively isolated.

Thus, if one projects the trends of the period from 1941 to 1943 for another three or four years, one might conceive of a situation in which active insurgency largely ceased to exist in North China. It is possible that in time there would have been no strong insurgent units to move back into areas that had been pacified. In such a situation, the Japanese forces could have been reduced, but what is more doubtful is whether Japanese troops could ever have been totally withdrawn. It would probably have been necessary to maintain many widely scattered garrisons in order to prevent a revival of insurgency, because the Japanese lacked popular support and their counterinsurgency strategy depended on military force. Thus North China shows the ultimate failure of military counterinsurgency when it lacks a concomitant political effort.

In Central China, really serious efforts in counterinsurgency started even later than in North China, but here they had a considerable degree of success in the Model Peace Zone

strategy, which was political as well as military. It should be noted that the Japanese soon realized the futility of scattered garrisons in insurgent-held territory and actually withdrew such garrisons during the period when their counterinsurgency was having most success in other areas. On the other hand, although Japanese counterinsurgency appears to have had its maximum success in the Model Peace Zones of Central China, this may have happened because it never faced serious tests in this region. As the Japanese were developing the zones, the Communists were concentrating on building up their organization in north Kiangsu. The real test of Japanese counterinsurgent strategy in Central China would have come when the Model Peace Zones were expanded into Communist areas, or when the Communists, having fully consolidated their north Kiangsu base, made a determined attempt to expand into the Model Peace Zones. In fact, as the Japanese position weakened in 1944, counterinsurgency faded out and the Communists became more interested in building up their strength for the postwar showdown with the National Government.

Another important conclusion may be drawn both from the Japanese wartime experience in China and from the prewar experience of the Chinese National Government in its campaigns against the Communists in South China: namely, that successful counterinsurgency against well-organized insurgent forces requires a consolidated counterinsurgent base area. In both instances the counterinsurgents started to succeed only when measures were taken first to secure an area against insurgent infiltration by elaborate local organization and control of the population. Only then was it possible to expand the fully controlled areas at the expense of the insurgent areas.

Finally, the Japanese experience in China shows the blind stupidity of not facing unpleasant facts about one's self. If the ruling elite in Japan had been able to look clearly at the evidence showing the extent to which the behavior of the Japanese Army in China had produced general anti-Japanese feeling and to face the problem of how to restore discipline, then it is likely that they would also have been able to address the question of why the Japanese Army was in China at all. And if they had been able to think clearly on this point, they might very well have concluded that Japanese national interests would be best served by withdrawing the army from China and seeking cooperation with the Chinese National Government. With the advantage of hindsight, even Japanese rightwing nationalists have commented on the stupidity of the Japanese militarists, who threw away any chance of real Sino-Japanese cooperation.

NOTES

Author's Note: Much of this account is based on the author's personal observations. He was teaching at Yenching University, just outside Peiping, from January 1938 to December 1941, where he assisted the anti-Japanese underground organization in Peiping and made extended trips into the insurgent base areas during summer vacations in 1938 and 1939. On the day Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, he escaped to insurgent territory and was appointed by Gen. Nieh Jung-chen as Technical Adviser to the Communications Department of the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei Military District. In the spring of 1944 he moved to Yen-an, where he worked until November 1945.

¹ U.S. Department of State, United States Relations With China (Publication 3573, Far Eastern Series 30; Washington: Government Printing Office, 1949), Annex 36. This publication is commonly known as the China White Paper.

² Area figures are taken from Chinese National Government, Administrative Districts of the Republic of China (1947) and the population figures from an estimate made in 1931 by the Department of Internal Affairs and published in Yang Wen-hsun et al., Chung-kuo Ti-li Hsin Chi (A New Record of Chinese Geography) (Shanghai: 1935).

³ An interesting account of one such unit is contained in Laurance Tipton, Chinese Escapade (London: Macmillan, 1949). Mr. Tipton escaped from the internment camp at Weihai in Shantung and joined this local insurgent group.

⁴ For example, the Wedemeyer Report says, "In the Direct Tax Bureau of the Ministry of Finance, it is reported, the 'administrative' expense of tax collection runs as high as 60 percent." (China White Paper, p. 799.) This was for the postwar period; however, in some pre-war "model hsien" a competent hsien magistrate with effective support was able to increase revenue nearly threefold without any increase in tax rates by stamping out evasion and increasing efficiency.

⁵ Hsin Hua Yueh Pao (New China Monthly) (No. 4, September 1951), 990, as cited in Chiu Sin-ming, "A History of the Chinese Communist Army" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1958).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ An account of the Japanese attempt to set up a government in North China is given in George Taylor, The Struggle for North China (New York: I.P.R., 1940), and in Paul Linebarger, The China of Chiang Kai-shek (Boston: World Peace Foundation, 1940).

⁸ U.S. Army Forces Far East, Headquarters, Military History Section, The North China Area Operations Record, July 1937-May 1941, Japanese Monograph 178, distributed by Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, pp. 202, 206-207.

⁹ Chalmers A. Johnson, Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962), p. 112.

¹⁰ USAFFE, North China Area Operations Record, pp. 243-262.

¹¹ Johnson, Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power, p. 76.

¹² Ibid., p. 56. Johnson quotes a Japanese source which reports that, during a campaign between August and October 1941 against a major mountain base area, 150,000 houses were burned, 4,500 people killed, and 17,000 deported to Manchuria.

¹³See Linchenger, The China of Chiang Kai-shek, for an account of Wang Ching-wei's Central China government.

¹⁴For details of the whole program, see Johnson, Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power, pp. 73-76.

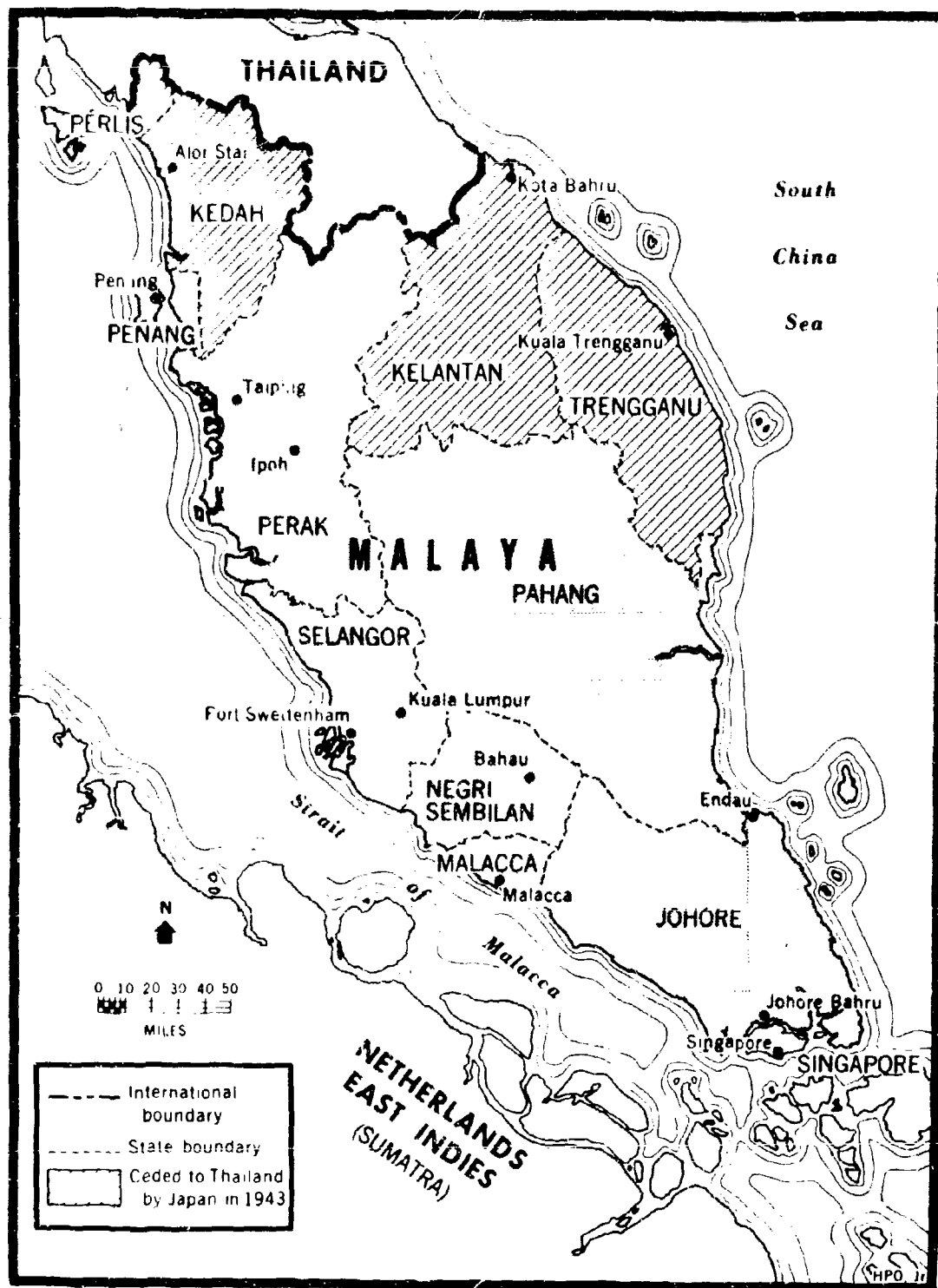
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Chapter Seven

**MALAYA
1942-1945**

by Bert H. Cooper, Jr.



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With Japanese forces in undisputed control of Malaya throughout World War II, a Communist-dominated resistance movement, assisted by the Allies, built up a formidable political organization and a guerrilla army which, because of Japan's surrender, was never tested.

BACKGROUND

British Malaya was invaded by the Japanese 25th Army on the morning of December 8, 1941, within hours of the Japanese attack on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. Advancing swiftly down the Malay Peninsula, the Japanese by February 1942 had driven the defending British, Indian, and Australian troops back to Singapore Island at the southernmost tip of the peninsula. The Japanese enjoyed overwhelming air and naval superiority in the Malayan campaign, and their army, though numerically inferior to the defenders of Singapore, went into battle flushed with nationalistic enthusiasm and confident of victory. Singapore fell on February 15, 1942, and the Japanese occupation of British Malaya began.¹

A tropical jungle country about the size of the State of Alabama, British Malaya was an administrative amalgam, consisting of the three Straits Settlements of Penang, Malacca, and Singapore; the four Federated Malay States of Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan, and Pahang, and the five Unfederated Malay States of Johore, Perlis, Kedah, Trengganu, and Kelantan. The three Straits Settlements were colonial territories, and all nine of the Malay States were British protectorates. Under the Japanese, the country was renamed Malai.

Singapore, which the occupiers renamed Shonan, or "Light of the South," was administered separately from the rest of the country. As Southeast Asia's principal seaport, with elaborate naval base facilities and a large Chinese population, Singapore was a strategic outpost which required close supervision by the Japanese.

The Japanese ceded four northern Malay States (Perlis, Kedah, Trengganu, and Kelantan) to Thailand in October 1943. This action was a matter more of form than substance, however, for Thailand was then a Japanese satellite and Japanese forces operated freely throughout Thai

territory. Japanese liaison offices were opened in Alor Star, Kota Bharu, and Kuala Trengganu, and Japanese advisers in the Thai military administration of the four ceded Malay States looked after Japan's economic and military interests in northern Malaya. Nevertheless, there were significant differences between Thai administrative policies in the northern Malay States and Japanese treatment of the rest of Malaya. The Thai governed more indirectly through the Malay sultans, but they were less tolerant than the Japanese of Islamic social customs and religion. Thailand sought to assimilate the Malaysians, and those who failed to learn the Thai language were subject to a special tax.²

The Japanese replaced the British colonial administration in Malaya with a centralized military administration (Gunsei) headed by a civilian official known as the Gunseikan (President), who was responsible to the 7th Area Army commander in chief in Singapore. Retaining the external forms of British administration, Japanese governors were installed in Penang and Malacca, and Japanese advisers were sent into each Malay State. The Malay sultans, who as the traditional but not actual rulers of their states had been the constitutional heads of the Malay States under the British system, became heads of Bureaus of Religious Affairs, with virtually no real authority. Their annual stipends were continued but on a reduced scale.³ Japan ceremoniously closed its consulate general in Singapore with the announcement that "the Malay Peninsula is now Nippon territory."⁴

Malaya Prospers Under British

Malaya had prospered under a century and a half of close economic and political ties with England. In the 19th century, tin mining and smelting developed into a major industry; with the inception of the automotive industry in the first quarter of the 20th century, the production of natural rubber became Malaya's other leading industry. By World War II, Malaya was producing about one-third of the world's tin and rubber and enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in Southeast Asia.

The need for labor in tin mines and on rubber estates, and the political stability associated with British rule, had brought about an influx of immigrants from China, India, and the nearby Netherlands East Indies (Indonesia), which accounted for Malaya's heterogeneous population and altered its economy markedly. Heavily dependent upon foreign trade, Malaya, by 1940, was importing some two-thirds of the rice and almost all of the industrial goods and manufactured commodities needed by its population of 5.5 million.

Economic Effects of War and Occupation

The Japanese occupation completely disrupted the Malayan economy. Japan could not absorb all of Malaya's rubber and tin, nor could the Japanese war economy supply Malaya with the necessary rice and consumer goods. Shipping facilities were not available to transport rice

from Burma and Thailand, Malaya's traditional sources. In Malaya, as elsewhere in Southeast Asia, the Japanese "took what they could of the export staples, sent an occasional trickle of textiles and other consumer goods, and, for the rest, preached the virtues of self-sufficiency."⁵

Japanese traders and businessmen, coming in the wake of their conquering army, formed syndicates which drove local businesses out of the market. Japanese traders naturally enjoyed special favors in distributing the few Japanese goods that got to Malaya. Acute shortages, especially of foodstuffs, prevailed, and prices soared. By 1943, according to the Japanese-controlled press, food prices in Singapore had risen almost 300 percent.⁶

Ethnic Diversity and Japanese Policies

Malaya's population, some 5.5 million in 1941, was an ethnic hodgepodge. The 2.5 million Malays were outnumbered by outsiders attracted to Malaya by its previously thriving economy—some 2 million Chinese, 750,000 Indians, and 30,000 Europeans. There were also about 20,000 Eurasians, the result of Malaya's long association with the West, and at least 30,000 aboriginal tribesmen, collectively known as the Sakai, who lived in the remote and mountainous ulu, as the Malays referred to the interior of the country. About 6,000 Japanese were living in Malaya when the war began.⁷

The Japanese favored the Malays and especially the Indians, many of whom were enlisted to fight on the Japanese side in the projected invasion of British India. It was the Chinese and Eurasians, and of course the European community, who bore the brunt of the Japanese occupation. Most Europeans spent the entire occupation period in concentration camps such as the huge one at Changi on Singapore Island.⁸

The Malayan Chinese were looked upon by the Japanese as a subversive element and a definite threat to Japan's rule. Most of them still gave primary loyalty to China, with whom Japan had been at war since 1937; moreover, they were suspected, not without some cause, of being under Communist influence. Although in some cases individual Chinese merchants were actively favored by Japanese local officials in an effort to win Chinese support against the guerrilla groups that soon formed, Japanese treatment of the Malayan Chinese was in general severely repressive.

Hungry, jobless, and fearful of the Japanese, thousands of Malayan Chinese left the cities and took up farming in remote settlements on the edge of the jungle. There had always been a small squatter population living on the jungle fringes, but during the occupation period their number increased noticeably. The newcomers settled on rubber estates made idle by wartime conditions or on land which had not been previously developed, some of which lay in areas reserved under the British system for the ethnic Malays.⁹

Communism Dominates Malayan Chinese Resistance

Malayan Chinese provided most of the leadership and popular support for the anti-Japanese resistance movement. Whether politically pro Kuomintang (Nationalist) or pro Communist, most Malayan Chinese opposed the Japanese. The Malayan Communist Party (MCP) was, in fact, composed predominantly of Malayan Chinese. It took an early lead in resistance activities, aided by the fact that the Japanese liquidated many Malayan Chinese prominent in business and political circles and quickly crushed the Malayan Kuomintang organization. This development left the resistance field open to the Communists, who by past experience were better prepared than the Nationalists for life in the underground.

The Malayan Communist Party was separate from the Chinese Communist Party organization in China, and had been founded clandestinely in 1930 under the aegis of the Soviet-dominated Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern. The General Labor Union (GLU), also organized at this time, was a Communist-front labor movement. Communist activity among Chinese and Indian miners, rubber tappers, and transport workers reached its peak in 1937, when troops were used to break up strikes and demonstrations in Selangor.

After 1937, when Japan began an all-out war against China, the MCP turned its attention to an anti-Japanese campaign. The party's labor front organization (GLU) became the Malayan Laboring Classes Anti-Enemy Backing-up Society, and the Communists set up the Overseas Chinese Anti-Japanese National Salvation Association. The ostensible purpose of these front organizations was to aid China by financial contributions and boycotts of Japanese goods, but the party's real concern was to bring more Malayan Chinese into contact with MCP cadres and thus under Communist influence. Some success in this endeavor doubtlessly accrued to the party, which had an estimated 5,000 members by 1939.¹⁰

The MCP's total failure to organize the Malays, among whom communism was inseparably identified with the Chinese and seemed an alien and unwelcome doctrine, meant that half of Malaya's population was completely closed to the Communists. Since the peasantry was predominantly Malay, the MCP thus had no real peasant base, but was based instead on Chinese miners and estate workers living in rural areas and Chinese shopkeepers and schoolteachers in small towns, organized and led by disgruntled intellectuals from the larger cities. Handicapped not only by ethnic limitations, but by stringent police measures, which made membership in the Communist Party punishable by imprisonment or even deportation to China, the MCP in prewar Malaya was confined primarily to the countryside yet lacked a true peasant support base.

Nevertheless, when the Japanese invaded Malaya in December 1941, they found there an underground Communist Party which, despite certain limitations, controlled probably the most effective organization in the country, outside of the administrative machinery of the British colonial government. Through its own underground and the various patriotic anti-Japanese organizations (believed by some Japanese sources to have had over 2,000 active members), the

MCP stood ready to mobilize Malaya's 2 million Chinese for an armed struggle against the Japanese occupation force. In the three and a half years of Japanese occupation that followed, this struggle was to leave the Communist cause considerably augmented, both in numbers and in spirit. ¹¹

INSURGENCY

The beginnings of this wartime insurgency actually went back six months before the Japanese attack, when the MCP first offered British authorities the assistance of the Malayan Chinese Communists in the event of a war with Japan. The offer was officially rejected, because colonial authorities in Malaya felt that any such alliance with an outlawed political faction in the Chinese community would be taken as an open admission of British weakness and, as one writer put it, "would have a disastrous psychological effect on the oriental mind." ¹² But at the same time, as war in the Pacific appeared imminent in the summer of 1941, the British Army's No. 101 Special Training School in Singapore began quietly to train selected personnel—both military and civilian, European and Asian—for irregular warfare and intelligence operations behind enemy lines.

British Wartime Alliance With MCP

When war broke out, Maj. F. Spencer Chapman, the deputy commander of No. 101 Special Training School, was authorized to meet secretly with MCP representatives. At this meeting, arranged through the Special Branch of the Malayan Police Force, the Communists agreed to supply to the British a number of young Malayan Chinese for training in jungle warfare and sabotage techniques. Thus began the wartime alliance between the British and the Communist Malaysians to resist the Japanese occupation of the country. ¹³

With an instructional staff of 10 officers and 50 enlisted men, all specialists in some aspects of unconventional warfare, No. 101 Special Training School gave hasty military training to 165 Chinese before the fall of Singapore. Each course ran for 10 days, and seven classes were rushed through the school before the end came in February 1942. As soon as a group had completed its training, it was sent to the front to form stay-behind parties and become the nucleus of an independent guerrilla force operating behind the advancing Japanese lines. These young Chinese, selected by the Communists and trained by the British, became the hard core around which the Malayan guerrilla army later developed. ¹⁴

MCP Organization

With the disappearance of the British colonial administration from Malaya, the Malayan Communist Party became virtually the only organized force left in the country which could

continue the struggle against the Japanese. The MCP organization, at least on paper, consisted of local underground cells and the usual Communist hierarchy of district and state committees, which were officially under the overall control of the Central Committee. There is some doubt, however, whether any permanent Central Committee existed during the war years. According to some sources, control was exercised in the name of the Central Committee by the secretary-general of the MCP in consultation with any Central Committee members who were in contact with him at a given time.¹⁵ Others believe that a military committee of the Central Committee, responsible for all guerrilla operations, may have been located permanently somewhere in Pahang. If a permanent Central Committee headquarters existed, its location remains a mystery.¹⁶

MCP Forms Resistance Army

In March 1942, the MCP announced the formation of the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA). A resistance-front organization completely controlled by the Communists, the MPAJA consisted of eight separate guerrilla forces by the end of the occupation period. The first of these, known as the 1st Independent Force of MPAJA, was formed in northern Selangor in March 1942, by the first 15 graduates of No. 101 Special Training School and about 35 local recruits provided by the Selangor State Committee of the MCP. The 2d Independent Force was formed in Negri Sembilan, from the second class of some 35 graduates from No. 101 Special Training School. The 3d Independent Force was begun by a third class of 60 No. 101 graduates, who went into action in northern Johore; and the 4th Independent Force was organized in southern Johore by the last graduating classes of the school. Later in 1942, a 5th Independent Force of MPAJA was formed in Perak. The 6th and 7th Independent Forces were organized in August 1943 and September 1944, respectively, while an 8th Independent Force, operating in Kedah, was about to be brought into the MPAJA organization when the war ended.¹⁷

These guerrilla forces were organized as independent units, often referred to in English as "regiments" or "groups,"* operating in the same geographic area throughout the insurgency. The MCP provided the necessary liaison between these units and exercised as much overall supervision as wartime conditions would permit. The party's Central Military Committee, composed of Communists with some military background, acted as the supreme command organ of the MPAJA. Members of the Central Military Committee were elected from the various MPAJA units, but priority in representation was given to the first four regiments, which had been formed by No. 101 Special Training School graduates. The Committee exercised strategic control over MPAJA forces, but complete operational control was granted to independent force

*In Chinese they were termed *tu-li-lui*, meaning simply "independent unit" or "force." The Chinese word for "regiment" (*t'üan*) was not used.

commanders, who were expected to take into account such factors as terrain, local conditions, public opinion, and enemy strength. ¹⁸

Each independent unit or regiment reportedly consisted of two to five companies, whose commanders were allowed a wide latitude of tactical freedom and individual initiative in operations. A company usually contained three to five platoons, with 10 to 20 guerrillas each. Unit strengths varied, since companies might range from 30 to 100 guerrillas each, and regiments could thus number from 60 to 500 guerrillas each. The strongest companies were usually deployed near the headquarters of the regiment. ¹⁹

Guerrilla Strength

Total guerrilla strength fluctuated during the occupation period. With almost a thousand men at the outset of the Japanese occupation, the insurgents lost about a third of their strength in the first 18 months, when almost all of the European and Indian troops who had remained behind Japanese lines either died or surrendered and many Chinese were unable to survive the rigors of the jungle. Later, in 1943, the number of insurgents began to rise, as more and more Chinese fled to the jungle to avoid the capricious atrocities and sporadic terrorism of the Japanese. By early 1945, when ultimate Allied victory seemed certain to the people of Malaya and Allied assistance to the MPAJA had been stepped up, the number of insurgents rose sharply. The British demobilized almost 7,000 guerrillas in late 1945. Accurate statistics on guerrilla casualties are not available, but it is probable that the MPAJA lost fewer than 1,000 men in the course of the insurgency. ²⁰

In addition to MPAJA guerrillas, there were always a few hundred non-Communist insurgents in occupied Malaya. Some of these were affiliated with the Kuomintang, but most non-Communist guerrillas were simply bandits or criminals with no permanent ideological commitments. The MPAJA sometimes entered into temporary and purely tactical alliances with these guerrilla bands, and often the MCP attempted to gain control by infiltration, but more often there was open warfare between Communist and non-Communist guerrilla groups. ²¹

The Underground Organization

Finding that the jungle into which they had gone to set up camp offered them little except concealment, the Malayan guerrillas soon realized that they were dependent upon the civilian population in nearby villages and towns for most of the essentials of life. To meet the needs of jungle-based guerrillas for food and supplies, as well as intelligence, the party organized a civilian counterpart to the MPAJA, an underground organization known as the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Union (MPAJU). This front provided local logistical support and financial assistance to MPAJA guerrillas, operated an intelligence system, and established a courier network linking the entire country. The MPAJU underground also performed valuable propaganda

gates and recruited guerrillas for the MPAJA. In the 1943-44 period of insurgent consolidation and growth, the MPAJU built up a sympathetic mass base of hundreds of thousands of Malayan Chinese.²²

Resistance Leaders

Little biographical data on insurgent leaders is currently available. The political leader of the MCP during the occupation period was Loi Tak (Lai Tek), a mysterious figure believed to be a Vietnamese, who, according to his own account, was a Moscow-trained revolutionary. He came from China to Malaya, probably in 1937, and rose rapidly to the top of the party hierarchy as chairman of the Central Committee. Loi Tak's uncanny ability to avoid capture by the Japanese on several occasions when his comrades were arrested earned him an illustrious reputation among the guerrillas. Since Loi Tak's position in the party was greatly enhanced by the Japanese elimination of many MCP leaders who might otherwise have challenged his leadership, the suspicion was later voiced that Loi Tak might actually have been in the pay of the Japanese. No hard evidence* has ever been revealed, however, either to confirm or to refute this charge.²³

The military commander in chief, who headed the party's Central Military Committee, was Lau Yeh (or Liu Yao), who was born in 1918 and was killed in July 1948, at the outset of the postwar Communist revolt.

The guerrilla leader best known to the Allies, however, was a young Chinese named Ch'en P'ing (Chin Peng), who functioned as the ranking MCP liaison agent to British behind-the-lines personnel in occupied Malaya. Born in Perak in 1922 of a Hokkien Chinese family, Ch'en P'ing became a Communist in his teens, and at 20 entered into what was to be his lifelong career as a Communist guerrilla leader. Major Chapman, who spent most of the war years with the Malayan guerrillas, recalled Ch'en P'ing as "a very intelligent English-speaking Chinese . . . a young and attractive Hokkien who . . . [became] Britain's most trusted guerrilla representative."²⁴

The MCP Formulates Long-Range Objectives

The real political aims of the MCP were embodied in the party's nine-point program adopted at a secret session in 1943. This program called for the defeat of the Japanese and the establishment of a Communist-dominated "Malayan Republic," allied with the U. S. S. R. and Communist China²⁵ and defended by a "National Defense Army" formed from the MPAJA. For obvious reasons, the Malayan Communists made public only the part of this revolutionary

* Nevertheless, the MCP eventually judged the charge to be substantiated and expelled the wartime leader, after he had absconded with party funds in 1947, never to be heard of again.

program which referred to the Japanese. The anti-Japanese resistance campaign offered the Communists a perfect opportunity to attract mass support to their front organizations, the MPAJU and the MPAJA, and thus to prevent any recrudescence of their political rival and deadly foe, the Kuomintang organization in Malaya.

The strategy adopted by the MCP in the face of the Japanese occupation was one of political consolidation and growth through various resistance-front organizations, delaying a major military offensive against Japanese occupation forces until after an Allied invasion had begun. This cautious strategy conformed both to the party's long-range political objectives of building up a mass revolutionary organization and to the practical realities of the immediate situation. By themselves, the MPAJA guerrillas were never in a position to challenge the occupation forces for control of Malaya: but they could lie in wait, just beyond the reach of the Japanese, preparing to attack from the jungles when the Allies landed on the beaches.²⁶

In fact, the MCP strategy of lying in wait and avoiding major encounters with the Japanese coincided perfectly with the instructions sent the guerrillas by Allied forces in the area. The British realized that a premature attack by the guerrillas against the Japanese occupation force could only result in massive retaliation against the noncombatant population of Malaya, which, besides causing widespread property damage, would very likely eliminate the MPAJA before the time of the invasion. Thus, the MCP and the Allies were in complete agreement as to strategy, though for very different reasons.

Guerrilla Operations Accentuate "Traitor-Killing"

The MPAJA employed most of the usual guerrilla tactics, including sporadic sabotage of communication and transportation lines, occasional raids on isolated police posts and lightly guarded installations, and assassinations of Malaysians who cooperated with the Japanese or otherwise incurred the wrath of the guerrillas. The insurgents controlled certain areas in the mountains and deep jungles at all times, but they did not normally attempt positional warfare. Major Chapman knew of only one instance in which the guerrillas "did not move camp at once after they had been discovered." This was at a camp in Selangor, where the guerrillas fought off the Japanese and were able to remain in control of the area.²⁷

The MPAJA guerrillas undertook no large-scale military operations against the Japanese. During three and a half years of insurgency, they engaged in some 346 individual operations against the enemy, of which only 200 were considered major military efforts by the Communists in their official history of the MPAJA.²⁸ Any comparison between guerrilla operations in this period and those carried on after 1948 against the British by essentially the same insurgents lends support to the thesis that the MPAJA never really made a determined military effort against the Japanese.

It is generally acknowledged that MPAJA was busier with "traitor-killing" than with guerrilla action against the Japanese.²⁹ By its own admission, MPAJA executed 2,642 "traitors," a number believed to be at least equal to the total number of Japanese casualties, both killed and wounded.³⁰ Most of these so-called traitors were Chinese, many of them leaders in the Malayan branch of the Kuomintang. The MCP assigned this specific task to the MPAJA's 5th Independent Force operating in Perak, and this unit set up 10-man killer squads to accomplish its mission. While all guerrilla units were to some extent engaged in this activity, the 5th "regiment" seems to have gone about it more professionally and on a larger scale.³¹

Military Training of Guerrillas

Young Chinese who joined the guerrillas in the jungle were put through a strenuous two months of military and physical training and political indoctrination, after which only the best trainees were selected for permanent duty, either in camp or on the outside as propaganda workers. The rest were returned to their homes as reserves, to be called up later when more arms became available. Military training included drill and practice in basic guerrilla tactics, demolition, and the use of small arms. Major Chapman found that most guerrillas were poor marksmen, although they displayed an obsessive interest in, and great ability for, memorizing hard facts and such details about weapons as their muzzle velocity and types of rifling.³²

Potential guerrilla officers were sent to Pahang for training by the 6th Independent Force. Candidates spent two months in the 6th Regiment's People's Academy, where they studied texts that had either been prepared by British liaison agents or been brought from China. The school's commandant, Ch'en Kuang, was a graduate of the Chinese Communist 8th Route Army's guerrilla school, and he reportedly patterned MPAJA training after that used by Communist armies in China. Despite their specialized military training, MPAJA's junior officers, especially those at platoon level, were generally lacking in initiative and proved to be one of the weakest links in the guerrilla organization.³³

Political Indoctrination, Propaganda, and Communication

In the beginning, every MPAJA company had its political commissar, who had charge of propaganda and political indoctrination. Since this commissar was usually senior to the company's commanding officer, there was often some antagonism between the two; however, this problem was removed when the system was abolished in late 1942, following a Japanese raid which cost the MCP at least half its political commissars. For the rest of the insurgency, the functions of political commissar were carried out by the deputy commanding officer.³⁴

Communist propaganda and political indoctrination always came first in guerrilla camps. There were lectures, group discussions, and the inevitable "criticism meetings," at which the men were free to voice critical views of their officers. Although the Communists considered

such open expression good for the morale and discipline of the men—in effect, a form of group therapy—some sources feel that it might also have accounted for the general lack of combat initiative noted in the junior officers.³⁵

Considerable emphasis was placed on group singing and the staging of simple plays on propaganda themes. Since most of the enlisted men were illiterate and spoke only South China dialects, the MCP laid great stress on teaching them to read and write the basic Chinese characters and to speak Kuo Yü, the standard Chinese language, used by MCP leaders. The guerrillas published some 20 newspapers on a regular basis and distributed these crudely mimeographed sheets among MPAJA units and the local populace. Although most were in Chinese, some were in English, Tamil, or Hindustani.³⁶

Communications among the farflung MPAJA forces posed a major problem for the guerrillas, who had to depend on jungle couriers organized by the MCP and MPAJU. The inefficiency of this courier system was such that there could be little central control over the independent units beyond setting general lines of policy and strategy. There were, in fact, almost no coordinated operations prior to the arrival of British liaison personnel with radio equipment.

Food and Weapons

During the first year of the insurgency, when the guerrillas moved into the jungle, food was their major concern. Some units lived off the jungle for days at a time. By late 1943, however, the MCP had developed a workable system of local logistic support for guerrilla units. MCP and MPAJU agents collected rice, tapioca, and other foodstuffs from Chinese squatters and Sakai tribesmen who lived near guerrilla camps. Medicines, shoes, and other equipment were either captured from the Japanese or obtained in nearby towns from Chinese tradesmen, sometimes by purchase but more often by extortion. The guerrillas also produced some of their own food by planting vegetable gardens in the jungle. Very often, however, these jungle clearings were bombed by Japanese aircraft.³⁷

From the beginning, the insurgents had arms and ammunition which the British had left behind and which found their way into guerrilla hands. Considering the scale of military operations by guerrilla forces, these arms were adequate. However, before the MPAJA could launch a major offensive, a considerable logistic effort by the Allies' South East Asia Command (SEAC) was necessary. This was the specific responsibility of Force 136, a special forces detachment at SEAC Headquarters in Colombo, Ceylon. This group was in charge of Allied liaison with resistance movements in Burma, Thailand, Indochina, and Malaya.

Allied Forces Send Men and Supplies

Outside contact with the guerrillas was first made in the spring of 1943 when Capt. John Davis, a British officer formerly with the Federated Malay States Police, and five Chinese

agents of Kuomintang persuasion, whom Force 136 had recruited in China, were landed from a Dutch submarine on the west coast of occupied Malaya. These subsequent submarine operations, known as GUSTAVUS II, III, and IV, introduced additional Allied personnel into Malaya.³⁸ By the end of 1943, an understanding was reached between British officers and the guerrilla high command. The British agreed to supply the guerrillas with weapons, funds, and training and medical facilities, and the MPAJA agreed to cooperate in military operations against the Japanese and in the maintenance of order during and after the war. It was also agreed that this was purely a military mission and "no questions of postwar policy were to be discussed."³⁹

The introduction of Mark IV Liberator aircraft in the Southeast Asian theater by late 1944 made it possible, for the first time, to supply the Malayan guerrillas by airdrop. SEAC plans called for dropping sufficient equipment to arm 3,500 guerrillas. The main air supply effort began in February 1945 and continued through September, reaching a total of almost 700 tons.⁴⁰ Financial aid amounting to 150 gold taels (3,000 pounds sterling) a month is also said to have been given to the guerrilla headquarters.⁴¹ By mid-1945, about 250 British and Asian liaison personnel had been infiltrated; in addition, a number of Gurkha support groups, perhaps totaling fewer than 150 men, were operating with the guerrillas in a supportive and control role. By September, a total of 510 persons had been infiltrated.⁴²

In these final months of the insurgency, a small Malay guerrilla force was organized by Force 136 personnel in northern Perak and Kedah, where MPAJA forces were weak or non-existent. Little is known about the activities of these Malay guerrillas, who fought under the name Ashkar Melayu Setia (Royal Malay Army).⁴³

All of this buildup in Allied personnel and military equipment in support of the various Malayan insurgents was intended as advance preparation for the long-planned Allied invasion of Malaya—known to SEAC as Operation ZIPPER. Scheduled for early September 1945, Operation ZIPPER died in its planning stages when Japan suddenly collapsed in late August. Thus deprived, by the rush of events, of a chance to demonstrate their combat ability on the field of battle, the Malayan insurgents came forth from their jungle camps to claim the victory that Allied arms outside Malaya had won over Imperial Japan.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

Japanese counterinsurgency got underway in Malaya even before the invading 25th Army had completely overrun the British colonial territory. The Japanese first encountered Malayan Chinese guerrillas and British stay-behind parties when they reached Selangor, halfway down the Malay Peninsula, in early January 1942. There, guerrillas were attacking bridges and railroads, and the Japanese reacted by indiscriminately rounding up Chinese villagers suspected of aiding the insurgents. "They would then give them lectures," Major Chapman recounted, "and

afterward, in their capricious way, either tommy-gun or bayonet them, or let them go free."⁴⁴ Thus began the curious mixture of force and persuasion that was to characterize Japan's counterinsurgent effort in occupied Malaya for the next three and a half years.

Japanese Purge Malayan Chinese

The Japanese regarded the Chinese in Malaya as their implacable enemies, and among the Chinese they considered the Communists to be the most dangerous threat to Japanese control of the country. Soon after they occupied Singapore, the Japanese organized massive identification parades to pick out those Chinese who had been actively anti-Japanese or were likely to become so. Hooded informers picked out hundreds of Malayan Chinese, who met death in mass executions that lasted for days. Evidence given at the war crimes trial in 1947 suggests that some 5,000 persons were killed at this time.

Specific categories of Chinese were singled out for execution in this initial purge. These included anyone known to have donated funds to Nationalist China or the Chinese Communists, anyone of great wealth, officials in the colonial administration, volunteers in the Singapore Defense Force, newspapermen, schoolteachers, high school students, recent immigrants from China, anyone from the Chinese island of Hainan (a hotbed of communism, according to the Japanese), and anyone with tattoo marks, which the Japanese regarded as a sure sign of membership in a secret society.⁴⁵ If many of these Chinese were spared the fate they "deserved," the Japanese-operated Syonan Times noted, it was only through "Japanese clemency and devotion to the high ideals of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere."⁴⁶

As a mark of their appreciation of such clemency and a sign of their willingness to cooperate, the Chinese community was called upon to make a "free gift" of 50 million (Straits dollars) to the Japanese Army. This sum was finally raised by the end of June, long after the due date set by the Japanese. The Syonan Times took this occasion to berate the Malayan Chinese, declaring their contribution a trifling amount in comparison with what had been raised for the China Relief Fund and complaining of their failure to cooperate in suppressing "Communist slum rats."⁴⁷

Treatment of Other Ethnic Groups

The Japanese took every opportunity to humiliate the British in Malaya. All Allied nationals were taken into custody, and most of these were imprisoned in the Changi concentration camp outside Singapore. European captives, both military and civilian, were widely used on labor details and road gangs, and many thousands were literally worked to death in the construction of the Siam railroad.⁴⁸ The Japanese boasted that "today in Syonan [Singapore] and wherever the victorious Nippon armies have brought the new order, Europeans may be seen, nude to the waist, doing jobs that Asians only were made to do before . . . ,

slouching their way through work which even Asian women are able to tackle with greater ability."⁴⁹

Malaya's 20,000 Eurasians also came in for Japanese condemnation as being too Westernized and pro-British. At the outset of the occupation period, all Eurasians were required to register with the police. At the police station they were given a lecture by Japanese officials, who reminded them that they were Asians and warned them to alter their Western ways.⁵⁰ Eurasians were constantly told that they should give up any ideas of preferential treatment in the New Order, stop "hankering" for clerical posts, and prepare to take up farming and shop-keeping.

Other than the few thousand Japanese immigrants in Malaya, the only people who were promised any degree of preferential treatment in the New Order were the Malays and the Indians. The Japanese hoped to play on nationalist sentiments in the Indian community in an effort to gain support against the British Empire, of which India was still a part during World War II. Several thousand Indians joined a Japanese-sponsored Indian National Army which saw action on the Burma-India front. Japanese attitudes towards the Malays were similar in some respects to those of British administrators in Malaya. Both tended to favor the more tradition-oriented and generally apolitical Malays over the more aggressive Chinese.⁵¹

A Limited Strategy

Japan's counterinsurgent effort in Malaya was always subordinate to the broader demands of the World War II situation. In such a situation the Japanese chose an essentially defensive counterinsurgency strategy, limiting their effective control of the country to strategic points and leaving the jungles to the guerrillas. At the same time, they were aware of the potential danger of guerrilla operations in support of an Allied invasion, which was expected after 1944.

After the conquest of Malaya, the 5th Division of the Japanese 25th Army was left behind as an occupation force, while its other two divisions were deployed on the Burma front and in the invasion of Sumatra. During the following year, units of the 5th Division were gradually transferred to the Burma-India theater, and fresh troops were sent out from Japan. These were organized, in September 1942, into the 12th Independent Garrison Force, based in Penang and roughly comparable to an infantry regiment. The 25th Army was thus gradually phased out.

In March 1943, the General Headquarters of the Japanese Southern Army moved to Singapore, and for the next year this headquarters had direct charge of the three main organs of Japanese rule over the territory—the 12th Garrison in Penang, the Kempetai (the Japanese military secret police), and the Inspectorates of Military Administration in Malaya and Singapore. For the last year and a half of the occupation, the 29th Army was responsible for the occupation of Malaya, as well as the defense of southern Thailand and the Andaman Islands and Nicobar Islands off the west coast of the Malay Peninsula.

In this final period, Japanese forces in Malaya included the 12th Garrison in Penang, the 18th Garrison in Singapore, the Southern Army's 3rd Kempetai, and the Malayan Inspectorate of Military Administration. The 29th Army set up its headquarters in Taiping, Perak, with Bureaus of Military Administration in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore.⁵²

Strength and Composition of Occupation Forces

The exact strength of Japanese forces in occupied Malaya is not known, but there were probably fewer than 5,000 troops in the two independent garrison units which formed the hard core of Japan's military forces in Malaya during most of the period. These two garrisons consisted of five battalions at the beginning of 1944, although later some of these units were moved up to the Burma front. The number of Japanese troops in Malaya was considerably higher at the beginning of the occupation in 1942 and toward the end of August 1945, after the Burma-Thailand front collapsed. Reliable casualty figures are not available, and guerrilla claims of 2,300 Japanese casualties (killed and wounded) are not above question.⁵³

The Japanese inherited from the British a Malayan police force of some 8,000 native troops, mostly Malays and Indians (Sikhs and Pathans), of whom they made good use in counter guerrilla operations. Major Chapman recalled that Japanese officers and NCOs usually led patrols of native troops, although a Sikh chief of police in Negri Sembilan was known to be an aggressive counterinsurgent leader.⁵⁴ The Japanese established a training center in Singapore "for the reeducation of the local police," and according to them, "the results were excellent."⁵⁵

The Kempetai, Japan's dreaded secret police organization, was highly successful in finding informers of all nationalities. Chinese agents and detectives were especially helpful and enabled the Japanese to penetrate the guerrilla movement on several occasions. Captured guerrillas and those who surrendered were frequently released on parole, after being "reformed" by the Japanese, and these ex-guerrillas proved to be a major source of intelligence. According to Major Chapman, the Kempetai maintained headquarters of their counterespionage organization in Ipoh, "where some Japs, some Chinese detectives and a few girls in their employ lived in a large and comfortable house."⁵⁶ To get cooperation, the Kempetai combined torture and threats with preferential treatment and promises.

In addition to the Kempetai, the Japanese established the Jikeidan, usually translated as Peace Preservation Corps, to maintain close supervision over the Malaysians. This system of population control, already employed in other Japanese-occupied areas,* was patterned after the neighborhood associations in Japan, where a number of households were organized and made collectively responsible for maintaining order and public security in their vicinity. In Malaya each Jikeidan group was made responsible for registering all the families in its neighborhood and reporting on

*Similar, for example, to the pai-chia system in China. See Ch. 6, "China (1937-1945)."

all strangers and suspicious activities. There were normally 30 families in each neighborhood unit of the Jikendan. The Peace Preservation Corps was highly developed in the urban areas of Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Penang, and Malacca, but never extended very far into the countryside.⁵⁴

In 1943 the Japanese began recruiting "young natives for light work and fatigue duty" in the occupation army's Auxiliary Service Branch (Heiho). Termed "subsoldiers" by Japanese sources, these young men were provided with clothing and were quartered with Japanese soldiers. There were some 8,000 subsoldiers. This move gave unemployed young Malaysians jobs, involved them in the Japanese administration, and, at the same time, freed troops for more active duty.

About the same time the Japanese organized in the cities and many villages what they termed "Malayan Volunteer Units," with a total troop strength of about 9,000. Officers and NCOs from the 12th and 18th Garrisons were sent out to the provinces to conduct regular training sessions, either every other day or every other week, along the lines of Japanese military training. Armed with confiscated hunting guns, these local native forces were supposed to help the Japanese Army defend the provinces against an Allied invasion or a guerrilla outbreak.

By April 1944, the Japanese had also set up a 2,000-man Malayan Volunteer Army, equipped with captured British weapons and trained for external defense as well as internal and local defense. This force, comprised mostly of Malays and some Indians, was the most trusted native outfit, with native as well as Japanese officers. The Japanese provided clothing and quarters for this unit, which was garrisoned permanently in the Johore Bahru area as a rear defense for Singapore.⁵⁵

Antiguerrilla Operations

The Japanese Army carried out several large-scale military operations against the guerrillas, although on a day-to-day basis it was left to the Kempetai and local police to maintain order in their own areas as best they could. When large-scale antiguerrilla operations were undertaken, local Kempetai and native police units were coordinated under the direction of the army, with close tactical air support being provided by the Japanese Army Air Corps in some instances. Most Allied sources comment on the widespread and unrestrained use of terrorism in these operations, and some feel that these terror tactics enabled the Japanese, with relatively few troops committed specifically to antiguerrilla operations, to isolate the insurgents and control, if not pacify, the country.⁵⁶

Little is known about Japanese antiguerrilla tactics in Malaya, except through Major Chapman's descriptions of those operations which he observed as an insurgent target, and of course such operations may not have been typical. Chapman reported that the Japanese used 200-man patrols, often deploying three patrols to an area for a week at a time. As soon as they located a guerrilla camp or a Chinese village or squatter settlement suspected of aiding the guerrillas,

planes were called in for an airstrike.⁶⁰ Once, according to Chapman, Japanese planes bombed and machinegunned a squatter village, while troops in trucks stationed at 50-yard intervals in a cordon around the area shot anyone attempting to get away.⁶¹

Kempetai agents, including ex-guerrillas, supplied useful information on the location of many MPAJA camps, and Japanese aircraft frequently spotted the jungle clearings in which the guerrillas grew vegetables. These tidy garden plots, characteristic of Chinese agricultural methods, were easily distinguishable.⁶² Villages and squatter settlements were bombed and the people massacred indiscriminately on the thinnest suspicion that they were supplying food to local guerrillas. Clumsy and heavyhanded, these large patrols and mass killings failed to eliminate the guerrillas and in fact tended to increase their number by terrorizing the Chinese villagers and driving those who survived into the ranks of the guerrillas. While these operations disrupted guerrilla activity, they had the ultimate effect of solidifying anti-Japanese sentiment.

The first major military success over the MPAJA occurred on September 1, 1942, when some 2,000 Japanese troops staged a sudden attack on the Batu caves in Selangor where a conference of high-ranking guerrilla leaders and party commissars was meeting. Operating on a tipoff from an informer, the Japanese killed over 100 guerrillas, many of them key personnel. It has been suggested that Loi Tak may have been the informer and that the Japanese thus unwittingly assisted him in purging the MCP of those who were then beginning to question his "live-and-let-live" policy toward the Japanese.⁶³

The next major military moves against MPAJA came near the end of the war. Japanese records refer to "large-scale subjugation operations" which were undertaken in the summer of 1944 and again from April to July 1945, both campaigns being conducted just prior to the transfer of several Japanese garrison battalions to the beleaguered Burma front. The effectiveness of these campaigns is still unknown. In the last months of the occupation, responsibility for rear area defense against guerrillas devolved upon native troops under the command of Japanese provincial governors, while the few remaining battalions of the Japanese garrisons in the Penang and Singapore areas braced for the expected Allied invasion.⁶⁴

Psychological Warfare Operations

The Japanese devoted considerable effort to psychological warfare. Directed chiefly against the British and the influence of European culture in Malaya, the general line of Japanese propaganda was that the British had become materialistic, decadent, and effete—in contrast with the Nipponese, who were depicted as idealistic, progressive, and willing to make great sacrifices for the emancipation of Asia from Western colonial thralldom.⁶⁵ The Japanese never established in Malaya, as they did in Indonesia and the Philippines, a nationwide propaganda organization; this function was largely performed through separate Malay, Indian, Chinese, and Eurasian communal associations led by pro-Japanese elements.

The Japanese initially took over the offices and equipment of the Straits Times in Singapore and operated an English-language, Japanese daily newspaper under various names (Shonan Times, Syonan Times, Syonan Simban, etc.) during the occupation period. By 1944, the Japanese press in Malaya also included the Perak Shimbun and the Malai Shimbun. The morning editions of these newspapers were in Japanese, while the same news appeared in the evening editions in English. It has been suggested that the motive behind this policy was to encourage the study of Japanese among those who wanted to get the news sooner.⁶⁶

An intensive campaign to promote the study and use of the Japanese language (*Nippon-go*) was begun. Daily lessons were given in newspapers and over the radio; special schools and study groups were set up. After July 1943, all private correspondence had to be in Asian languages, and English was specifically prohibited. However, official publications were obliged to continue using English, which was the nearest thing to a common language in Malaya at this time. Japanese, a difficult language even for fellow Asians, could not replace English in the brief span of the occupation period.⁶⁷

All schools were closed in 1942. Later, as textbooks prepared under Japanese supervision became available, most Malay and Indian schools were reopened, as well as a few for the Chinese. The Japanese also set up the Asiatic Promotive Training Center in Singapore (later moved to Malacca) where they reeducated Malaysians to serve as teachers and administrators in Japanese Malaya.⁶⁸

Japanese Move Toward Conciliation

In the beginning of the occupation period, the Japanese clearly regarded Malaya, or Malai as they called the country, as an integral part of the Nipponese Empire. After 1943, however, there were signs of a change in Japanese policy in the direction of granting greater political autonomy for the area. These political reforms were, in a sense, a part of the occupier's psychological warfare operations and were designed to win native support. In October 1943, consultative councils were established in Singapore and the Malay provinces (the former States), and the number of Malayan officials in the Japanese administration was increased.⁶⁹ Emphasis was now placed on "building a new Malai" which would be a "self-contained, self-respecting member of the East Asian family of nations." Although no definite promise of independence was ever given, there were vague hints of this as Japanese occupation was increasingly threatened.⁷⁰

Japanese efforts to make Malaya self-sufficient in foodstuffs were totally inadequate, as were attempts to restrain the runaway inflation that threatened the Malayan economy from the beginning of the occupation. Occupation authorities set food prices and warned against black-marketeering, but they were unable to affect the basic forces of supply and demand. The Malaysians were constantly exhorted to grow vegetables in every open space, and in some cases rubber trees were felled to make room for rice and tapioca. Perhaps as much for propaganda

reasons as anything else, the Japanese set up two agricultural settlements, which they termed "collective farms," near Endau in Johore and at Bahau in Negri Sembilan. Chinese from Singapore and other overpopulated areas were encouraged to become farmers in these settlements, but the scale of this operation was so small, despite elaborate publicity, that it had little effect on the food problem.⁷¹

In early 1944, about the time the 29th Army took charge of the occupation of Malaya, Japanese policy towards the Malayan Chinese underwent a major change. Seeking to "utilize the Chinese merchants' greed for profit," Japanese documents report, the 29th Army decided to encourage Chinese enterprise by relaxing price controls and other restrictions. For example, gambling houses were permitted to open—an act that the Japanese considered a distinct concession to the Chinese fondness for games of chance. The 29th Army also prohibited the confiscation of Chinese merchants' properties, but the good effects of this policy were undermined when units of the Japanese Navy and Air Corps, as well as the Southern Army Headquarters in Singapore, continued to impound Chinese property arbitrarily. When export to Japan became impossible during the last year of the war, the 29th Army apparently bought and stockpiled goods produced by Chinese firms in a further attempt to bolster Malaya's collapsing economy.⁷²

According to Japanese documents, which frankly describe occupation policy towards the Chinese as consisting of alternately "threatening and conciliating them," the army's biggest change in policy occurred in March 1945, when a rally was held in Kuala Lumpur so that leading citizens of the Chinese community could express to the Japanese their wishes regarding business conditions. Held at the secluded house of the former British High Commissioner, under strict secrecy to protect those attending, the rally was well attended and the Japanese considered the affair a singular success. The Kuala Lumpur railway station was bombed that day by Allied planes, but Japanese sources observed that "the calm attitude of Japanese authorities increased the trust of the guests and the bombing did more good than harm."⁷³

In 1945, however, even the most imaginative and enlightened occupation policy could not have saved the Japanese in Malaya. The ultimate fate of Malaya was being decided by the success of Allied arms; counter guerrilla operations in the spring of that year, as well as the 29th Army's conciliatory overtures to the Chinese merchants, were to be of no avail. Had Japan not been defeated in World War II and thus forced to return Malaya to the British, these measures might have been regarded as the beginnings of a successful counterinsurgency action. Such was not to be the case.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

Japan capitulated to the Allies on August 14, 1945, but the Japanese in Malaya, who had been preparing all summer for a spirited defense of that territory, were reluctant to admit defeat. Japanese Army Headquarters in Singapore did not release news of the surrender until August 20.

after a special envoy from Tokyo had dissuaded local Japanese authorities from further resistance. In an attempt to save face, the Japanese Army in Malaya defiantly declared that it had lost none of its honor since it had been fully ready to fight a decisive battle. Nevertheless, the army agreed to obey the Emperor's command that all his troops lay down their arms peaceably in order to spare the innocent people of Asia from total destruction by "a new and most cruel bomb."⁷⁴

By August 25, all military operations by Japanese forces in Malaya were halted and, on September 5, the first British and Indian troops came ashore unopposed at Singapore and Port Swettenham, near Kuala Lumpur. The war thus ended tamely in Malaya, perhaps to the disappointment of some local contestants, who had been preparing for a glorious invasion and an heroic defense.⁷⁵

British Return Frustrates MCP Aims

When the British returned, they were greeted everywhere by MPAJA guerrillas, who—as soon as the Japanese surrender was announced—had come out of the jungle triumphantly. During the crucial period before the British arrived, Communist guerrillas were in effective control of most Chinese villages, where they were busy setting up "People's Committees" and liquidating pro-Kuomintang Chinese and other anti-Communist Malaysians. But they never challenged British authority directly and made no effort to set up a Communist state in the interval between the Japanese surrender and the return of British forces.

The presence of Force 136 personnel in Malaya was doubtlessly an important factor in the relatively smooth return of British authority to the war-ravaged country. Wherever possible, British liaison personnel acted to prevent communal violence and political terrorism. This endeared the British to the war-weary Malaysians, most of whom sincerely welcomed the return of the colonial power as a force for law and order and a harbinger of prosperity.

Once established, the British Military Administration (BMA), which was to administer Malaya until April 1946, lost no time in rejecting Communist political demands. Instead of transforming the MPAJA into a permanent Malayan defense force, as the Communists wanted, the BMA required all guerrilla units to disband. On December 1, Lau Yeh, as MPAJA's commander in chief, reluctantly issued the official deactivation order. Each guerrilla who turned in a weapon received a mustering-out bonus of 350 Malayan dollars (at the time about \$163 in U.S. currency). Some 6,800 guerrillas were eventually demobilized by the BMA.

The situation in Malaya during World War II had been in many ways ideal for the Communist guerrillas. There was an unpopular occupying power which was hard pressed abroad and therefore unable to concentrate its forces against the insurgents. The MPAJA had time and space in which to train and indoctrinate its men in the relative safety of the jungle. A sympathetic indigenous population and later the approaching Allied forces provided logistic support

to those in the jungle. And the Japanese were a vulnerable enemy and an easy target for occasional guerrilla action—an important morale factor for the insurgents. Since the anti-Japanese activities of the guerrillas coincided with popular hatred of the occupier, MPAJA fell into the role of national hero.

MCP Turns to Political Activity

The abrupt termination of hostilities in the Pacific caught the MCP unprepared for the post-war period. The leadership of the party, naive in many respects, was generally indecisive and hesitant in the face of the immediate situation. Some Malayan Communists apparently thought that power would come into their hands by default; others may have feared a head-on clash with the well-armed British forces who were being genuinely welcomed by the Malayan masses. For one reason or another, the MCP made no attempt to seize power through a swift coup de force in late 1945, but opted instead to build up its political base in preparation for a general uprising later.*

In the immediate postwar period, the MCP functioned, for the first time, as a legal political party. Nevertheless most of its key personnel remained in the party's underground section as a precautionary measure.⁷⁶ The Communists attempted to exploit political and economic unrest in postwar Malaya by stirring up strikes, infiltrating labor unions and newly organized nationalist political movements, and setting up Communist-front trade unions. Despite several serious strikes and labor disturbances in January and February 1946, the MCP failed to interrupt the reconstruction of Malaya, and by April the BMA was able to return the administration of the country to civilian authorities. Neither economic nor political activity had provided a springboard for a Communist takeover of Malaya.

Japanese Accomplishments Reconsidered

In judging Japanese counterinsurgency, it must be remembered that Japan was involved in a major war which, after a series of early successes in 1941-42, began to go badly. Counterinsurgent activity in Malaya was always limited by the overall war effort against the combined might of American, British, Chinese, and Dutch forces in the Pacific. Consequently, Japan's primary objective in Malaya was strategic control of the country rather than pacification of the countryside. Throughout the war the Japanese were able to achieve this limited objective.

A secondary objective, which became more pressing in the last years of the war, was to eliminate the guerrilla threat and pacify the interior of the country. The Japanese were never able to realize this more ambitious objective, however. They did not have enough troops in Malaya to mount a sustained counterinsurgency program, and the several counter guerrilla

*See Ch. 16, "Malaya (1948-1960)." .

operations which the Japanese undertook were not followed up by effective occupation of the areas affected. Outside of the major cities and strategic points, no permanent garrisons of either Japanese or loyal Malayan troops remained on guard to prevent the return of the insurgents as soon as the occupiers were out of sight. Although highly effective in the short run, Japanese terrorism turned those who survived into willing recruits in the guerrilla organization, thus feeding the insurgency. Moreover, Japan's intensive psychological warfare campaign and the belated attempts at political reform—although both had certain imaginative and positive aspects—won few converts and were regarded as signs of weakness by the Malaysians as prospects of a Japanese victory in the Pacific waned.

Since there was never a final and decisive contest of arms between the Japanese occupation forces and the Malayan guerrillas, both sides may lay claim to a measure of success—claims difficult to evaluate realistically. Nevertheless, one might advance some general conclusions about Japanese counterinsurgency in Malaya: first, regional and theater-wide relationships and military power determined the ultimate fate of any counterinsurgent effort; second, counter-guerrilla operations (sweeps) were of limited value if not followed by some form of permanent occupation of the area; and third, psychological warfare and politico-socio-economic reforms could not be used as substitutes for military victory but had to accompany or follow success on the field of battle.

NOTES

¹Masanobu Tsuji, Singapore—The Japanese Version (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1960), pp. 264, 270-271, and *passim*; also U.S. Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, Japanese Studies in World War II, No. 54, "Malay Operations Record (November 1941-March 1942)."

²U.S. Office of Strategic Services, Research and Analysis Branch, Japanese Administration of Occupied Areas—Malaya (Washington: GPO, 1944), pp. 3-4.

³F. C. Jones, Japan's New Order in East Asia: Its Rise and Fall, 1937-45 (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 382.

⁴Shonan Times, March 24, 1942, quoted in Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 383.

⁵Jones, Japan's New Order, pp. 388-389.

⁶Syonan Sinbun, June 27, 1945, quoted in Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 389.

⁷F. Spencer Chapman, The Jungle Is Neutral (New York: Norton, 1949), p. 16.

⁸O. W. Gilmour, With Freedom to Singapore (London: Ernest Benn, 1950), *passim*; Jones, Japan's New Order, pp. 386-388.

⁹Victor Purcell, The Chinese in Modern Malaya (Singapore: Donald Moore, 1956), p. 45.

¹⁰Gene Z. Hanrahan, The Communist Struggle in Malaya (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1954), pp. 25-26; J. H. Brimmell, A Short History of the Malayan Communist Party (Singapore: Donald Moore, 1956), pp. 10-13.

¹¹Hanrahan, Communist Struggle, pp. 26-27.

¹²Chapman, Jungle, p. 29.

¹³*Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

¹⁴Hanrahan, Communist Struggle, pp. 32-33.

¹⁵John Davis and Richard Broome, letter to author, December 9, 1964.

¹⁶Hanrahan, Communist Struggle, pp. 26, 37.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 33-35, 40.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 34, 37.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 37.

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 33-34, *passim*.

²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 35-36; Purcell, Chinese in Malaya, p. 357.

²²Hanrahan, Communist Struggle, pp. 36-37; Chapman, Jungle, p. 234.

²³Hanrahan, Communist Struggle, pp. 139-140, 59-60; Harry Miller, Menace in Malaya (London: Harrap, 1954), pp. 62-73.

²⁴Chapman, Jungle, p. 114.

²⁵Quoted in Purcell, Chinese in Malaya, pp. 35-36.

- 26 Hanrahan, Communist Struggle, p. 44.
- 27 Chapman, Jungle, p. 217; Hanrahan, Communist Struggle, p. 44.
- 28 Malayan Communist Party, Central Military Committee, Ma-lai-ya jen min k'ang-jih chun chan-chi (MPAJA Combat Record), quoted in Hanrahan, Communist Struggle, p. 44.
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- 30 Hai Shang-ou, Ma-lai-ya jen min k'ang-jih chun (Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army), quoted ibid., p. 44.
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- 32 Chapman, Jungle, pp. 203, 162-163.
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- 34 Ibid., pp. 38-39.
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- 37 Hanrahan, Communist Struggle, pp. 35-36; Chapman, Jungle, pp. 240-241.
- 38 Hanrahan, Communist Struggle, p. 41.
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- 40 Ibid., pp. 378-379.
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- 66 Jones, Japan's New Order, p. 382; U.S. OSS, Japanese Administration, p. 27.
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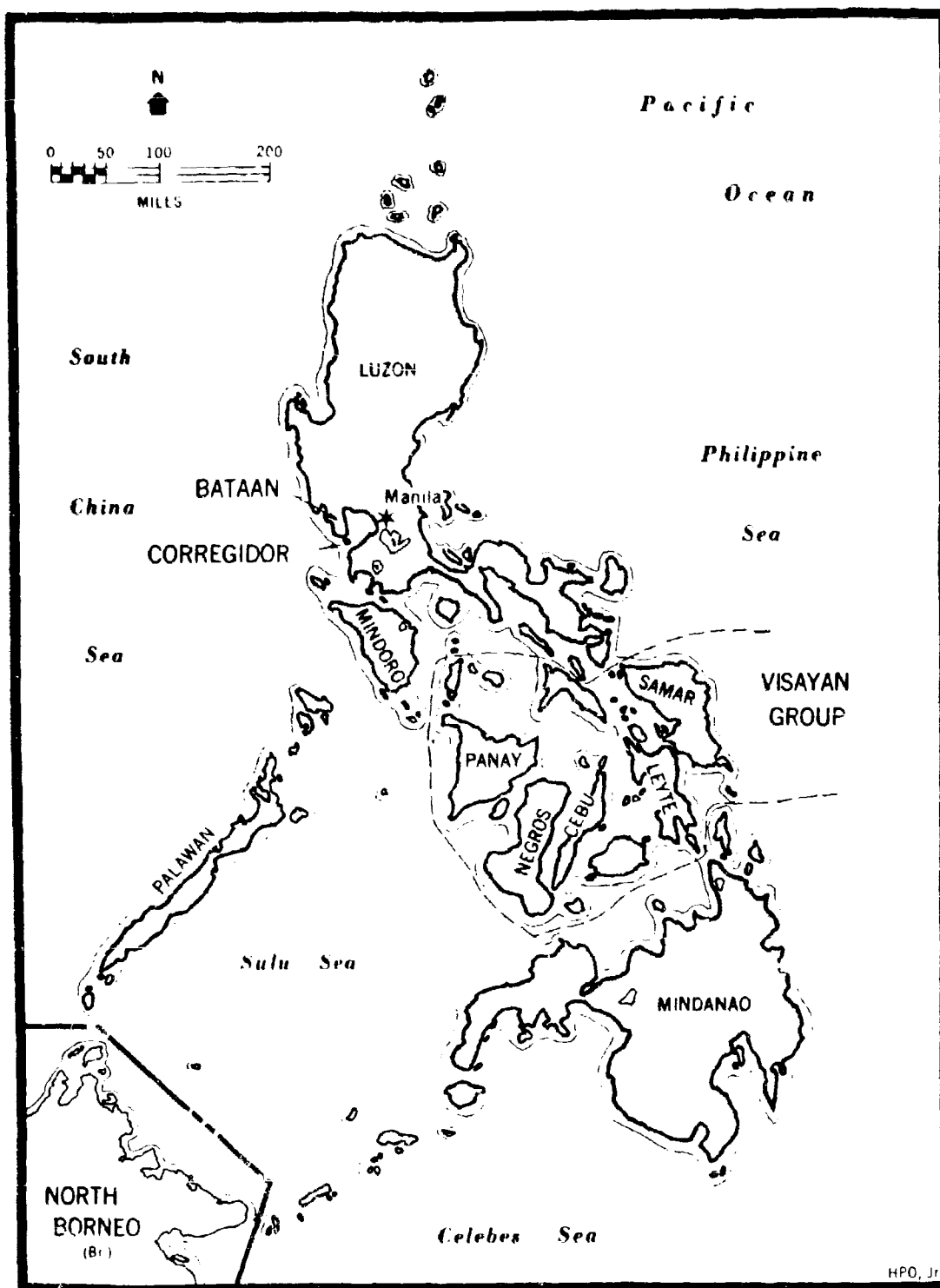
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Chapter Eight

**THE PHILIPPINES
1942-1945**

by Stanley L. Falk



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Japanese forces occupying the Philippine Islands during World War II held cities and strategic points, while resistance forces, made up of some 75 different guerrilla organizations, controlled the countryside and provided military intelligence to the returning American forces.

BACKGROUND¹

When the Japanese 14th Army seized the Philippines in the spring of 1942, it occupied one of the world's largest archipelagos—a vast chain of some 7,000 islands stretching roughly 1,000 miles north and south and about 600 miles across at the widest point. The total land area is approximately 116,600 square miles, contrasting with Japan's 149,000 square miles and the 94,000 square miles of the British Isles. Fewer than 500 of the islands of the Philippines are larger than one square mile, and fewer than 2,500 have names. Luzon, 41,000 square miles, and Mindanao, 35,000 square miles, account for nearly 70 percent of the land area, while the group of islands known as the Visayas, lying between Luzon and Mindanao, comprises roughly another 20 percent of the archipelago.

Terrain varies widely throughout the islands. Chainlike mountain ranges form the backbone of the archipelago, the highest rising to well over 9,000 feet on Luzon and Mindanao, but not exceeding 2,600 feet in the Visayas. The mountains are generally heavily forested, bordered by hilly grasslands, and frequently separated by broad, flat, alluvial plains, the largest of which are on Luzon and Mindanao. Frequently the mountainous terrain closely parallels the rugged and irregular coastline. There are few large rivers, but many short, swift streams and several lakes.

The climate is basically maritime and tropical, with uniformly high relative humidity, plentiful rainfall, steady heat, and soft winds. Parts of the archipelago experience seasonal dry spells, but in general the islands are wet a good deal of the time.

The People and the Economy

In 1939 the population of the Philippines totaled some 16 million persons, concentrated almost entirely on Luzon and Mindanao and the intervening Visayan group. Although there were a few large cities, notably Manila, the people generally lived in small, nonurban farming communities. The great majority of them were ethnic Malaysians, speaking a variety of languages, although English and the native Tagalog predominated. More than 90 percent were Christians, primarily Roman Catholics; while Muslims accounted for just over 4 percent. Families were tight-knit units, with the father occupying a position of respect and authority. Women were also treated with great respect.

The general economic situation of the Philippines at the start of World War II was good, although the standard of living was not particularly high. The economy was primarily agricultural, with some fishing, mining, and lumbering, and little manufacturing. The tropical climate reduced essential clothing and shelter requirements and was conducive to good crops. Taxes were not oppressive, a minimum wage law helped protect the laborer, and the strong family system led Filipinos to assume responsibility for unemployed or otherwise distressed relatives. Only in central Luzon, where farm workers and a growing number of tenant farmers were becoming increasingly unhappy over their lack of economic mobility, was there any sign of dissatisfaction. Indeed, when compared with his neighbors in nearby Southeast Asia, the Filipino had a relatively high level of subsistence and, with some exceptions, a carefree existence. The Japanese invasion in December 1941 and subsequent occupation of the Islands, however, quickly disrupted this situation and shattered the Philippine economy. Inflation, unemployment, and shortages appeared for the first time.

Government and Politics During World War II

Before the war, the Philippines had been a commonwealth under United States sovereignty, with a republican form of government. Early in 1942, after the Japanese had secured a strong grip on the Islands, the Philippine President Manuel L. Quezon and the United States High Commissioner and their staffs were evacuated to Australia. A Philippine Commonwealth government-in-exile under Quezon was subsequently established in Washington. The Japanese, in turn, set up a puppet government in the Philippines under their military control. This government was headed by an Executive Commission composed of Filipinos under the chairmanship of Jorge Vargas. On October 14, 1943, the Japanese recognized the "independence" of the Islands and a new government headed by President Jose P. Laurel was established. The Japanese, however, continued to control and dominate the Philippines and few Filipinos believed the myth of independence. Indeed, while the puppet officials cooperated with the Japanese and urged the people to do likewise, the Filipinos were overwhelmingly anti-Japanese. They never regarded

their conquerors as liberators, nor did they actively support the Japanese-sponsored Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere.

Philippine political parties before the Japanese invasion had been generally conservative. Only the dominant Nacionalista Party of Quezon was of any importance; others, including a few "poor-man's" parties, had little effectiveness. A Philippine Communist Party, with roots in agrarian movements, had been officially established in 1930 but outlawed two years later. Members went underground or joined the weak Philippine socialist movement. In 1939, after Quezon pardoned Communist leaders, the two leftist parties merged into the Communist-dominated, "Communist Party of the Philippines, Merger of the Communist and Socialist Parties of the Philippines." This new group developed some support through espousal of popular-front tactics, but the Nacionalistas still won a heavy victory in the 1941 elections.

When the Japanese occupied the Philippines, they abolished all political parties. The Communists again went underground and, unlike other Philippine parties, continued their activities. Early in 1942, they united leftist organizations in central Luzon—Communists, Socialists, and peasant-labor groups—into the Hukbong Bayan Laban Sa Hapon (People's Army Against the Japanese), popularly known as the "Hukbalahap." This was a politicomilitary organization, led and directed by Communists, but attractive to many non-Communists because of its strong and open opposition to the Japanese. It grew to be the largest and perhaps most powerful anti-Japanese organization on Luzon and was, in effect, the only guerrilla movement in the Islands with a political objective more ambitious than simply ending the Japanese occupation. With this single exception, Philippine political parties played no part in the insurgency against the Japanese.²

INSURGENCY³

The Philippine guerrilla movement may be said to have begun in January 1942, on Luzon, less than two weeks after major Japanese landings on that island and within a few days after the fighting had passed the area in which the first guerrilla groups were located.⁴ These groups, consisting primarily of American-led Philippine Army elements cut off from the main force of Fil-American defenders that had retreated to Bataan, were subsequently enlarged by the addition of Filipino civilians, Bataan escapees, and released Filipino prisoners. Similar groups sprang up elsewhere on Luzon and in the vast areas of the central and southern Philippines which the Japanese did not invade until late spring. In the latter areas, the Japanese occupation was incomplete or ineffectual, and many Philippine Army units, ignoring the orders to surrender that Lt. Gen. Jonathan M. Wainwright* had been forced to issue in May 1942, simply

*Lt. Gen. Wainwright commanded all U.S. forces in the Philippines after the evacuation of Gen. Douglas A. MacArthur in March 1942.

withdrew before the Japanese and became guerrillas. Given the predominantly anti-Japanese feelings of the Filipinos, it was not difficult for these groups to gain additional recruits and civilian aid.

Guerrilla Rivalries Vitiates Potential Strength

During the period of the Japanese occupation, an incredible number of guerrilla organizations were operating throughout the Islands. Probably at least 75 groups of some significance could be listed, although it is impossible to do more than guess at the strengths of these organizations. Because units were constantly organizing, disbanding, consolidating, or splitting, because it is difficult to distinguish between full- and part-time guerrillas, and because many individuals changed their status and degree of support for the insurgency during these years, no accurate figures can probably ever be offered. A careful guess would be that active guerrilla strength (armed combat personnel) probably ranged between a low of 15,000 and a high of 100,000, with a great many more thousands of Filipinos supporting the resistance movement in varying degrees.⁵

Despite the organizational basis established for several of the larger guerrilla groups, the greater number of Philippine resistance organizations enjoyed no central direction or coordination, struggled with each other for supremacy in a given area, and in many cases behaved like rival criminal organizations attempting to carve out individual areas of operations. Indeed, it would be more correct to speak of the Philippine insurgencies, in the plural, than to refer to a single movement. Their common aim was to expel the Japanese from the Islands, their common source of support the sympathetic Filipino population and, later, the American forces of General MacArthur driving north from Australia. Otherwise, they were separate groups, frequently at odds with each other, jealous of their prerogatives, authority, and sectors of control. In general, this rivalry was not disastrous for the resistance movements, primarily because the Japanese were never strong enough to take advantage of the disunity among the guerrillas, and secondarily because most of the guerrillas rarely lost sight of the fact that the Japanese were the main enemy.

One group in particular—the Hukbalahap—was as interested in fighting fellow Filipinos as in opposing the Japanese, if not more so. With the primary objective of advancing communism in the Philippines, the Huks sought to carve out their own area of control in central Luzon, to recruit and indoctrinate as many converts as possible, and to destroy those elements, both Philippine and Japanese, that stood in their way. Indeed, the Huks themselves claimed to have killed four times as many Filipinos as Japanese during the occupation.⁶

A somewhat different type of problem existed on Mindanao, where the presence of a large number of Moros, practicing Muslims, militated against the unification of anti-Japanese forces. Not only was there a struggle for supremacy between many of the Moro chieftains, but also the

continuance of prewar hostilities, jealousies, and antagonisms between Moros and Christians continued to divide the Filipinos in this area. As a result, Moros could be found both supporting and opposing the Japanese.⁷

The insular nature of the Philippines made unification of the guerrilla movements difficult in any event, language differences certainly did not help, and guerrilla attitudes compounded the difficulties. As a result of the constant struggle for power between rival organizations, the anti-Japanese forces in many areas remained divided and hostile to each other, perhaps even after U.S. forces returned to the Philippines in 1944 and 1945. On Luzon and many of the other islands, no single guerrilla command was ever established; of the major islands, only Panay seems to have had a unified guerrilla movement. The only link between various organizations was that provided eventually by the tie with MacArthur's General Headquarters, Southwest Pacific Area (GHQ, SWPA), but even then coordination between units was not widespread.

Before the war, the Philippines had been divided into a number of military districts, established along geographical lines, on the basis of which the Philippine Army divisions had been organized. Guerrilla organizations sometimes endeavored to follow these lines and GHQ, SWPA attempted to reorganize the insurgents within the old military districts. Given the number, size, and nature of guerrilla units operating in different areas, at different times and with varying degrees of success, this proved extremely difficult to do.

Major Guerrilla Organizations and Leaders

Of the great number of guerrilla organizations in existence in the Philippines from 1942 to 1945, several merit particular mention as the largest, most active, and most important. In northern Luzon, the majority of the guerrillas were organized into the United States Army Forces in the Philippines (northern Luzon), by Lt. Col. Russell W. Volckmann, an American officer who had escaped from Bataan. The USAFIP (NL) was divided into seven area commands and, by the latter part of the occupation, probably totaled about 8,000 men.⁸ Central Luzon contained a large number of guerrilla movements, with considerable overlapping in both area and personnel, but no coordinated organization. The largest of these was probably Maj. Edwin P. Ramsey's East Central Luzon Guerrilla Area, with a maximum of about 20,000 men.⁹ The Huk organization of Luis M. Taruc was as large or larger, and a third group, the Marking Guerrillas, under Col. Marcos V. Agustin, had at most 10,000 men.¹⁰

On Leyte, Col. Ruperto K. Kangleon finally succeeded in uniting some 3,000 guerrillas into a single organization, while on nearby Samar an equal number of guerrillas remained split into several groups until the American return. The major leaders on Samar were Capt. Pedro V. Merritt, whose men controlled the northern part of the island, and Lt. Col. Charles M. Smith, under whose command the entire island was finally unified. Two guerrilla organizations, totaling about 6,000 men, shared the island of Cebu, finally joining under the command of Lt.

Col. James Cushing. Panay was unique among major areas in that a unified command was established early and continued in unquestioned authority throughout the war. Under Col. Macario Peralta, this force totaled between 10,000 and 20,000 men, divided into seven area commands. About half as many guerrillas on Negros were eventually united, after a long and bitter struggle, into two divisions commanded by Lt. Col. Salvador Abcede. On the huge island of Mindanao, after an equally difficult effort, Col. Wendell W. Fertig finally succeeded in forming the 35,000 guerrillas under his command into a single organization of six divisions.*

Early Guerrilla Operations Stress Intelligence Collection

Almost as soon as many of these guerrilla units were organized, they began to harass the Japanese. Generally, the resistance fighters utilized hit-and-run tactics, striking at lines of communication, isolated depots, and small patrols or garrisons. They carried out sabotage and sometimes assassinated Filipino collaborators or attacked groups of Filipinos engaged in labor or farming for the Japanese. Occasionally, a larger battle between guerrillas and Japanese took place, but the insurgents soon learned they could not stand up to large enemy forces and generally avoided engaging them.

Early in 1943, General MacArthur sent orders to the Filipino guerrillas that their primary mission was to gather intelligence for use by American forces then fighting their way back to the Philippines. To this end, the insurgents were to avoid stand-up fights or any other activity that would provoke Japanese retaliation severe enough to restrict their intelligence activities; they were to organize, and husband their strength in order to join in the fight alongside American forces at a later date. Most guerrillas heeded this directive, although many, of course, did not; the latter continued to strike at the Japanese as before. Colonel Fertig, on Mindanao, was one of many guerrilla leaders who opposed the tactics dictated by GHQ. He argued that unless the guerrillas actively opposed the Japanese, the people would lose interest in the insurgency and cease to support it, and this would lead to its ultimate demise.

Area Control

As the expected American invasion appeared to draw near, guerrilla strength increased and guerrilla tactics became bolder. This was especially true of areas where Japanese control was limited. The Japanese, it should be emphasized, never really controlled the entire Philippine archipelago, and guerrilla units frequently dominated large areas of the Islands. More often than not, this was simply the result of Japanese failure to occupy an area or to garrison it with more than a few troops concentrated in one or two towns or along the seacoast. Where the

*The total of the unit strengths given here exceeds the overall figure provided earlier in the text. The figures here are probably maximum and include unarmed supporters as well as combat forces. In any event, they can only be considered as estimates.

Japanese were in strength, they generally could hold whatever area they desired; where there were no Japanese, or only a small number, guerrillas usually controlled the area. On Mindanao, for example, as early as September 1942 the guerrillas successfully dominated large portions of the western part of the island, and gradually extended their hold. Elsewhere, on Panay and Samar, for instance, guerrillas operated openly in large sectors, established local governments, and controlled the economy. On the other hand, on Luzon, although there were large numbers of guerrillas, strong occupation garrisons and a good road net that assured the Japanese fair mobility kept most guerrilla organizations underground or limited to relatively small areas. Nevertheless, by the latter part of the war, the guerrillas probably controlled more square miles of the Philippines than did the Japanese.

Harassing Tactics Increase

Guerrilla tactics at this stage are perhaps best summed up in this Japanese description of "bandit" operations on Mindanao in the spring of 1944:

(1) The bandits occupy and utilize key points of communication, firing on and making surprise attacks against our military traffic. They flee whenever we attack.

(2) They construct obstacles on the roads and destroy bridges and, when we are engaged in clearing the way or in repair work, they execute surprise attacks.

(3) By cutting electric wires, kidnaping people, burning homes, and other actions calculated to disturb the peace, they draw out our forces and fire on us unexpectedly. If the bandits outnumber our forces, they execute aggressive attacks on a considerable scale.

(4) The enemy draws us out by using small units and then carries out an enveloping attack with his main force. When our forces outnumber theirs, the enemy, particularly the Moros, lie in wait in jungle areas for our return and attack fiercely.

Casualty Estimates

Guerrilla casualties during the two-year campaign against the Japanese are impossible to calculate, as are those inflicted on the Japanese. On the guerrilla side, few if any records were kept or are available, and Japanese claims of guerrillas killed are scattered, uncoordinated, incomplete, and unreliable. Moreover, Japanese figures for the destruction of "bandits" undoubtedly include large numbers of innocent civilians, many more of whom probably died than did actual guerrillas; it is also very likely that such figures are somewhat exaggerated.* In

*A great number of casualty figures for both guerrillas and Japanese are scattered throughout Japanese intelligence reports on the Philippine insurgency. These, however, are incomplete, conflicting, and untrustworthy; coordinating and evaluating them would be a herculean undertaking. The interested reader is referred to the great mass of published ATIS documents relating to the Philippines.

the absence of accurate records, one can only conclude that many thousands of Filipinos were killed by the Japanese during the occupation and that many of them were either guerrillas themselves or individuals who supported the guerrillas.

As far as guerrilla-inflicted Japanese casualties are concerned, it must be recalled that the primary guerrilla mission was the gathering of intelligence rather than the killing of Japanese so that Japanese losses were undoubtedly not as high as they might have been. Guerrilla claims were always exaggerated and the few Japanese figures that are available are inadequate and probably unreliable. For what it is worth, however, in the first five months of 1944, when guerrilla activity was increasing in anticipation of the American invasion, the Japanese reported losses of 338 killed and 474 wounded.¹² Considerable research would be necessary, however, to evaluate these figures and to derive others for the entire period of the Japanese occupation.

Intelligence and Counterintelligence Operations

In their efforts to gather intelligence of Japanese strength and dispositions—as much for their own protection as for the use of MacArthur—the guerrillas gradually built up a remarkable intelligence network of agents and observers, many of them right in the midst of Japanese-controlled areas. In Manila, for example, guerrilla operatives worked as employees in key transportation and communication centers; constantly observed and reported on Japanese strength, movements, equipment plans, and methods; carried out sabotage; and assassinated Japanese agents. Intelligence gathered throughout the Islands was transmitted by a vast messenger and radio communication net and broadcast to friendly ears outside the Philippines. Guerrilla intelligence was not always accurate, but it provided a generally correct picture and there was enough of it to satisfy most reasonable demands. For MacArthur's headquarters, the major difficulty "was not obtaining information," in the words of one historian, "but rather shifting the plethora of guerrilla reports, which attained every degree of accuracy and detail."¹³

To protect their intelligence network and, indeed, their lives, the guerrillas were constantly on the alert against the Filipino spies, informers, and collaborators on whom the Japanese depended for the bulk of their intelligence about the resistance movement. In tracking down these agents, the insurgents were often as ruthless as the Japanese themselves and did not hesitate to use assassination, execution, and other terroristic methods. Whenever possible, guerrillas avoided concentrating in large numbers or doing anything to call attention to themselves. They shifted their base of operations frequently and kept a minimum of records that might, if captured, yield dangerous information.

Popular Support for the Guerrillas

The guerrillas' main protection against the Japanese, however, was the Filipino people themselves. With very few exceptions, the Filipinos hated the Japanese and looked forward

eagerly to the return of American forces. These feelings the guerrillas encouraged as much as possible. By word of mouth (the so-called bamboo telegraph) and by written or printed newspapers and pamphlets, they reiterated MacArthur's pledge to return, denounced Japanese cruelties and refuted Japanese propaganda, passed on news of the outside world as originally transmitted by the American radio, and did everything else possible to elicit local support and maintain Filipino morale. Where the guerrillas controlled the local governments, this was often fairly simple, but guerrilla propaganda penetrated even territory tightly held and controlled by the Japanese. When propaganda itself was not enough, terroristic tactics were employed, frequently with great success. On the other hand, many guerrilla organizations tried to avoid antagonizing civilians by needless "requisitions" or the indiscriminate use of terrorism.

Given the sympathetic attitude of the average Filipino, it was not too difficult for the guerrilla to gain and keep his support. Many civilians were, of course, recruited as full-time guerrillas, but the great mass of Filipino civilians were silent and, often, long-suffering allies. In some areas, guerrilla units organized the local populace to plant, harvest, and distribute food crops and to transport, if not actually supply, other items. In those areas under substantial guerrilla control, the guerrillas frequently administered the local economy and thus assured themselves of a good supply base. Military supplies, such as weapons and ammunition, were generally captured from the Japanese or improvised. In addition, many guerrillas who were former "unsurrendered" soldiers had held on to their arms. A number of guerrilla organizations boasted small ordinance shops, and rifles and bullets were frequently the prime objectives in raids on the Japanese. Sometimes rival guerrilla forces would attack each other for supplies.

External Support

A major source of support and supply was of course General MacArthur's Southwest Pacific Area (SWPA) forces. Even before the fall of Bataan in the spring of 1942, MacArthur had sent Col. Claude Thorp through the lines in an attempt to organize and coordinate guerrilla activities in central Luzon. And barely half a year after the Philippine surrender, in late 1942, limited radio communication was established between GHQ, SWPA and some of the guerrilla forces. In January 1943, the first tangible assistance from outside, in the form of an official representative of General MacArthur, reached the Philippines. This was Maj. Jesus A. Villamor, a Filipino pilot, who was sent to the Islands with a few others to assist, develop, and coordinate guerrilla activities. Within a short period he was followed by many others, as well as by shipments of military supplies, medicine, and communications equipment that continued increasingly over the next two years.

Just how many liaison, intelligence, and communications personnel reached the Philippines is not clear, but more than 1,600 tons of supplies were brought in by submarine. These supplies included arms, ammunition, medicine, currency (real and counterfeit), and propaganda

material, including the famous "I Shall Return" cigarettes and matchbooks. This promise, reiterated and reemphasized with every piece of American propaganda reaching the Philippines, helped to maintain morale and enable the Filipinos to continue their struggle.¹⁴

It should not be overlooked, however, that the single circumstance of greatest assistance to the insurgency was the fact that Japan was engaged in a major war on many fronts and that Allied pressure kept the Japanese from concentrating their efforts against the Filipinos. Had the United States lost the war or settled for a negotiated peace that left the Philippines in Japanese hands, the guerrillas might well have been defeated.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

The administration of the occupied Philippines, carried out by the Japanese 14th Army, was aimed primarily at utilizing the Islands in support of the Japanese war effort. To this end, control and exploitation were the basic goals of the occupation. From the very beginning, however, Japan's attempt to secure a firm grip on the country was hampered by the fact that anti-guerrilla activities in the Philippines had a relatively low priority in her overall war effort.

Since the Japanese did not station major forces in the area, they were unable to make any sustained effort at wiping out Filipino resistance. Nor were they able to overcome the strong Filipino hatred of the conqueror. Although they undertook a massive propaganda program to win local support, the Japanese themselves provided the strongest rebuttal to this program by their harsh treatment of the Filipinos. They exhibited complete contempt for the people of the Philippines. They beat, tortured, killed, stole, raped, and heaped all manner of indignities on the helpless Filipinos. Indeed, had they desired to earn enmity rather than respect and friendship, they could not have chosen a better course of action. As a consequence of all of these factors, the Japanese never really controlled the Philippines. They utilized the Islands as an important staging area and base on the line of communications to the south and southwest Pacific. But they failed to exploit them economically to best advantage or to secure them militarily.

Japanese Administration

On January 3, 1942, on the heels of the fall of Manila, yet five months before the final American surrender in the Philippines, the Japanese proclaimed an end to "the sovereign rights of the United States" in the Islands and announced the beginning of Japanese rule. To direct military government in the Philippines, as well as to oversee the puppet government organized at the same time, an Inspectorate of Military Administration was established in 14th Army Headquarters, with branch offices in each of five newly formed administrative sectors. Except for the fact that the puppet government operated under the thumb of the Japanese, it

resembled in general the prewar Philippine government. Jorge Vargas, the chairman of the newly formed Executive Commission, was chosen by the Military Administration as were the provincial governors, who were now given considerably more power than they had enjoyed prior to the occupation. Japanese "advisers" worked closely with puppet officials to ensure their loyalty.

Attempts to Win Popular Support

The Japanese reinforced these administrative steps with a major propaganda effort to win over the Filipinos. Through the medium of the controlled press and radio, they emphasized such themes as "Asia for the Asiatics," the role of a free Philippines within the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, and the ultimate defeat of the United States. The Filipinos were urged to cooperate with their Japanese "brothers," who dangled the prospect of independence before their eyes. To hasten this independence, the Filipinos were exhorted to assist in the destruction of the guerrillas, to strengthen the national economy within the Co-Prosperity Sphere, and to attain "true Orientalism," both in spirit and thought.

The Japanese reorganized the Philippine educational system in an effort to develop an Asiatic rather than a Western orientation in schoolchildren. They encouraged the study and use of the Japanese language and the observation of Japanese holidays, introduced Japanese movies and the sport of Jujitsu, and sent promising Filipino students to be educated in Japan. While making no attempt to force Shintoism or Buddhism on the Filipinos, the Japanese did encourage Filipino participation in Japanese rituals and apparently brought pressure on the churches to support Japanese propaganda campaigns. They also seem to have made an effort to transform Filipino nationalism into some sort of church- and state-sponsored cult similar to Shintoism.

A major step in the campaign to promote Philippine-Japanese ties was the establishment in December 1942 of the Public Welfare Group for the Construction of a New Philippines (Kalibapi). This organization claimed a membership of hundreds of thousands, and theoretically incorporated all former Philippine political parties and almost all other public and private organizations, including a women's auxiliary and a young people's branch. It was an additional political control device and stressed cooperation with the Japanese as a means of achieving Philippine independence. Other efforts in this direction were the establishment, in April 1943, of the Spiritual Bridging Society Between Filipinos and Japanese, the opening of a Japan Cultural Institute in Manila that July, and the organization of a Bureau of Oriental Culture in 1944 within the Philippine Ministry of Education to promote research into old Filipino customs and emphasize their link with "things Oriental."

The granting of Philippine "independence" by the Japanese, on October 14, 1943, was in a sense the culmination of these efforts to promote good relations. Japanese propaganda had

stressed the theme of independence since January 1942 and the Kalibapi had played a large role in laying the groundwork, writing a new constitution, and publicizing and pleading for support of the new state to be established under Japanese sponsorship. When "independence" came, however, it left Japanese control of the Philippines unchanged. The 14th Army still directed the puppet government and ran the Islands. Few Filipinos were won over by the myth of independence, and any that might have been were swiftly disabused by the continuance of repressive measures by the Japanese.¹⁵

Japanese Exploitation of the Economy

Nor were the Filipinos long misled by pious Japanese statements about rebuilding the Philippine economy. Japan's economic measures, like her political measures, were almost completely unsuccessful in winning Filipino loyalty. This is not surprising, since the Japanese were patently more interested in exploiting Philippine resources to fill the needs of their war effort than in repairing the disrupted economy of the Islands. The Japanese invasion had damaged the Philippine economy, and the occupation only increased the difficulties. The Japanese took complete control of the economy—with disastrous effect. They interned American and other foreign businessmen and closed their businesses; shut down factories or allowed them to close for want of materials; issued military currency that rapidly depreciated in value, driving the harder American and Philippine currency out of circulation; and of course cut off all overseas trade, to the detriment of Philippine commerce and industry.

All sectors of the economy gradually deteriorated under such heavy-handed interference. There was widespread unemployment, inflation, and black-market activity. Philippine agriculture, the backbone of the economy before the war, became primarily subsistence farming, barely able to support those families engaged in it. Indeed, the 14th Army, which had hoped and planned to live off the plentiful Philippine countryside, was forced to import large quantities of rice from Indochina. In short, despite the optimism the Japanese expressed about the Philippine economy, it was clear to the Filipino that conditions were very bad indeed. For this he blamed the Japanese. The continued Japanese failure to improve the situation only served increasingly to alienate him.¹⁶

Military Strength and Mission

If Japanese political and economic efforts to control the Philippines were notably less than successful, the 14th Army's military endeavors were equally unfruitful. Japan never had sufficient military strength in the Philippines to do an effective job against the resistance movement; her troops and military resources were required in other areas. From the spring of 1942, when they completed their conquest of the Philippines, until 1944 when the American offensive came within striking distance of the Islands, the Japanese never regarded the Philippines

as anything more than a rear-area staging base along the line of communications to the fighting fronts. They made no attempt to put any more defensive strength into the Philippines than was absolutely necessary. Had they done so, the story of the occupation might have been considerably different.

The transfer of Japanese combat units from the Philippines after the American surrender reduced the 14th Army to but 22 infantry battalions and supporting elements by the latter part of 1942. It is doubtful if there were more than 40,000 Japanese soldiers in the Philippines, a figure that did not increase appreciably for about a year. By the end of 1943, the arrival of 11 additional infantry battalions and support and overhead forces may have raised Japanese strength to at most 60,000 men. The majority of these troops were garrison rather than combat units; they contained relatively more infantry and less supporting arms than did combat units and may have had some antiguerrilla training. At this stage of the war, however, it is doubtful if reinforcing units arriving from Japan contained anything better than new recruits with only the most rudimentary training.

In March 1944, Lt. Gen. Shigenori Kuroda, the 14th Army commander, informed Tokyo that when the American invasion came, he would need about 24 garrison battalions to control guerrilla activities and 7 or more combat divisions to resist the invasion—an approximate ratio of 1 antiguerrilla fighter for every 3 men at the front. This estimate may well have been influenced by the fact that, when it was made, General Kuroda had only 24 battalions of garrison troops, plus a single division of what he might hopefully have referred to as combat troops. Indeed, after the war he stated that he had actually felt a need for 50 rather than 24 battalions to use against the guerrillas.

Within two months after General Kuroda's report, heavy reinforcements of both combat and garrison troops—as well as air units, which hitherto had been very few in number—began reaching the Philippines. By this time the Japanese were concerned primarily with the defense of the Philippines against invasion and, if anything, were limiting rather than expanding their antiguerrilla forces. Significantly, many of the garrison forces were reorganized as combat units and given anti-invasion rather than antiguerrilla missions. By October 1944, Japanese Army ground and air forces (including construction units) in the Philippines totaled some 432,000 men; naval land forces probably raised this figure by an additional 20,000 men. Had this strength been available for use against the guerrillas, the Philippine insurgency could probably have been crushed. But by this time, American forces were approaching the Islands.¹⁷

Use of Indigenous Forces

In an effort to augment their antiguerrilla strength, the Japanese also made limited use of Filipino forces, primarily the Philippine constabulary and police. These forces operated under the close supervision of Japanese military and civil police officers and, when engaged in

tactical operations, were apparently under the command of Japanese soldiers. Other types or organizations were also utilized. On Leyte, for example, small, so-called Special Forces of former Filipino soldiers were set up; and in northern Luzon, Samar, and Mindanao, pseudo-guerrilla groups actually operated with Japanese support. There were even reports that the Japanese were arming the Hukbalahaps as an antiguerrilla measure—since the Huks were said to have fought other guerrillas as much or more than they fought the Japanese—but this seems doubtful. The Japanese also made use of spies and informers, who in the long run may have proved more valuable than such organizations as the constabulary.

It was not easy for the Japanese to recruit Filipinos for antiguerrilla work. Those who did join were usually either forced or attracted by promises of food and preferential treatment. As a result, the Japanese could never trust their Filipino supporters. They apparently gave them little training, a minimum of weapons, and almost no freedom of initiative. The following observations by two members of the Philippine Constabulary, as described in a Japanese report of mid-1944, is probably an accurate description of the situation:

- a. The majority of the present officers of the constabulary units are former guerrilla officers and as before are pro-American.
- b. The attitude of the officers toward cooperation between the Philippine Republic and Japan is not sincere.
- c. In the event of an American landing the majority of the police officials will not cooperate with the Japanese. They will take refuge in the mountains temporarily and will resume cooperation with the American Army.
- d. The majority of the NCO's and EM are pro-guerrilla and hence do not like to fight against the guerrillas. Their attitude is: if guerrillas cause disturbances we will arrest them. But we will not arrest them if they do not provoke trouble, even though we know they are guerrillas.¹⁸

An Overview of Japanese Strategy and Operations

With the limited forces at their disposal, the Japanese undertook a counterinsurgency program aimed at the destruction of guerrilla forces, bases of operation, and radio stations.¹⁹ Without sufficient troops to secure the vast areas of the Philippine archipelago, however, they had to satisfy themselves in general with holding on to the principal cities and towns, thus leaving large portions of many islands to guerrilla control. From the very beginning of the occupation, the Japanese were aware that there were considerable Fil-American forces that had been bypassed or never militarily contacted, whose leaders had refused to surrender despite General Wainwright's order to do so. Limited "pacification measures" were therefore begun at once,²⁰ but it was not until September 1942 that the Japanese made any really concerted attempt to crush the insurgency. Even this effort, primarily a reaction to increased guerrilla activities on Luzon and in the Visayas, was a fairly unambitious campaign, since the Japanese forces

were small and the area to be covered quite large. Thus, while it achieved some success, especially in northern Luzon, it fell short of Japanese hopes and expectations and left disturbingly large areas unsecured.

During 1943, plans for large-scale operations against the guerrillas were thwarted by lack of troops. The Japanese undertook four three-month campaigns, including a major attack against the Huk stronghold in central Luzon and a few other concentrated operations against guerrilla organizations in other areas. These were punishing operations, but the Japanese were unable to sustain them or to carry them out on the broad scale necessary for their complete success. While they felt they had made some gains in the first half of the year, the results of later operations were completely unsatisfactory. Another effort early in 1944 met with even less success. Not only were the Japanese frustrated by their continued troop shortage, but the knowledge that American forces were driving closer to the Philippines and the growing antipathy toward the Japanese had increased and strengthened guerrilla activities.

By now, the Japanese were beginning to concentrate on the preparation of defenses against the anticipated American invasion. Since little in the way of defensive preparations had been undertaken previously, these new efforts required considerable attention and left little time or means for counterinsurgency. Accordingly, the Japanese decided to make a serious attempt at eliminating guerrilla activities only in those areas they considered important for the defense of the Islands—areas containing major cities, bases, ports, rail lines, and main roads. And although reinforcements were reaching the Philippines in increasing numbers after mid-1944, the Japanese command determined to use only the minimum possible number of these for anti-guerrilla operations, saving the bulk of their forces for defensive operations against the American invaders. Guerrilla forces thus increased in strength and boldness, so that when American armies did return to the Philippines (October 1944 for Leyte and Samar, January 1945 for Luzon, subsequent months for the rest of the islands), guerrilla organizations in many areas were able to participate in the fighting as regular combat units.

Antiguerrilla Tactics

The Japanese relied mainly on small-unit actions in their counter guerrilla strategy. Unable to control the entire countryside, the Japanese attempted to garrison major cities and towns and to control guerrilla activity by aggressive patrolling. When possible, they carried out surprise attacks aimed at surrounding and destroying guerrilla groups. Acting on the basis of information obtained from spies or other collaborators or extracted under torture from helpless villagers, the Japanese would choose an area in which the guerrillas were known to have a base. Then detachments ranging in size from one or two squads to several hundred men would descend on the area from all sides. With most avenues of escape thus blocked, many of the trapped guerrillas would be killed or captured; at the very least, the units would be so split up and

disorganized that their cohesiveness and offensive potential would be seriously disrupted for some time to come. In such actions, guerrilla leaders and their staffs were prime targets. Sometimes the Japanese used bloodhounds to flush their quarry, the dogs being "more fearful than any Jap"²¹ for their ability to track a scent. When possible, the Japanese attempted to follow up attacks and maintain pressure on the guerrillas, but troop shortages apparently prevented sustained activity except during a few major campaigns in which larger forces were employed.

The 14th Army occasionally utilized aircraft for reconnaissance or spotting and, later in the occupation, for sporadic bombing of suspected guerrilla bases. Most of the time, however, this use was limited by the small number of army air units stationed in the Philippines. The Japanese also made some use of small boats, manned by army personnel, to patrol coastal areas. They even carried out several amphibious landings, with light naval support, to attack or cut off guerrilla forces. On at least one occasion, a few planes flew in direct support of an amphibious landing, although air support of ground operations was extremely rare.

"Zoning"—A Technique of Control and Terrorism

One of the most effective and feared Japanese techniques was the "zoning" campaign. A platoon of soldiers would surround a town before dawn or arrive suddenly by truck and completely seal the area before any of the inhabitants realized what was happening. Down the road another platoon would be doing the same to a second town. Or a single platoon might move from village to village—while others would be operating against still other towns. No one was allowed to leave the sealed-off areas, although anyone wanting to enter was permitted to do so. The Japanese lined up everyone caught in their net, pulled out suspected guerrillas or guerrilla supporters, and executed them—frequently by slow torture. Collaborators and spies, sometimes hooded to prevent recognition, were present to help pick out the victims. The Japanese tortured many of the inhabitants simply in the hope that they might implicate others. Even women and children were subject to this treatment. If a whole town was suspected of having harbored or aided guerrillas—which was often the case—then all of its inhabitants might be horribly killed and the town burned to the ground.

The effect of this technique was twofold. On the one hand, it increased Filipino hatred of the Japanese. On the other hand, there is no doubt that many were intimidated by these tactics. Terrified, exhausted, frequently near starvation because the Japanese had cut off their food supplies, they bowed to the ferocity of the conqueror and either refused to help the insurgents or began to collaborate actively with the Japanese.

The people . . . became unfriendly, non-cooperative, and, in some instances, hostile to the [guerrillas]. They refused to give shelter, much less food, as they used to. In some cases whereabouts of [guerrilla] companies and hideouts of [guerrilla]

officers' families were pointed out. There was a pathetic case of a soldier who was refused shelter in his own home."

While zoning campaigns were not carried out regularly, the Japanese maintained a constant program of intimidation of the Filipinos. Torture, beatings, killings, denial of food and water, public mistreatment of women, seizure of families of suspected guerrillas, and other extreme forms of abuse were all common. Much of this obviously resulted from the harshness of Japanese military training, the prevailing lack of discipline in such matters, and the callousness of the Japanese leadership.²³ Much was also a deliberate attempt to terrorize the population as a means of crushing the resistance.

Population Control and Intelligence Collection

The Japanese made maximum use of puppet officials, from the Philippine puppet government all the way down to small villages, to denounce and inform on the guerrillas and to urge cooperation with the Japanese. In some areas, "Neighborhood Associations," modeled on those customary in Japan, were established, with membership a requirement in order to draw rations, to travel, and possibly to get a job. Groups of from 10 to 15 families were organized into a unit. Each unit was responsible for the activities and behavior of each member; it was also required to post antiguerrilla guards, report the presence of any nonmember in the district, and undertake other activities useful to the Japanese. A 14th Army publication on "Methods of Collecting Information About Guerrillas" suggested "utilization of the inhabitants" by cutting them off from contact with the guerrillas and by threat or use of force. It concluded that "the main method of gathering information is to separate the people from the guerrilla bands and to grasp their hearts at suitable moments."²⁵

Widespread use of these methods enabled the Japanese to amass a great deal of fairly accurate information about the guerrillas. That many terrorized Filipinos, under torture, denounced innocent people, apparently did not bother the Japanese; that many others died in agony rather than reveal damaging information, merely frustrated their captors. What was important to the Japanese was the large amount of intelligence that could be gathered in this fashion. As a result, they had fairly complete order-of-battle information and knowledge of guerrilla operating areas; they frequently knew the identities of individuals and the nature of supplies landed by U.S. submarines, often within a few days of the actual landing; they could pinpoint guerrilla radio stations; and, on many occasions, they had substantial information about the movements of guerrilla forces.* It would appear that only their lack of military strength prevented them from taking proper advantage of this information.

*Japanese intelligence reports, reproduced in many ATIS documents, bear witness to the surprising amount of information available to the Japanese.

Japanese Offers of Amnesty

When the Japanese could not effectively attack guerrilla forces, they attempted to persuade the resistance fighters to surrender by the promise of good treatment and no reprisals. This apparently had some limited success. Yet when the Japanese failed to keep their word, mistreating or cruelly interrogating those who did give up, the effect was, of course, to dissuade others from surrendering. An additional problem for the Japanese was that guerrillas, after giving themselves up to one 14th Army unit and then being released on parole, would sometimes be recaptured and mistreated by other units. "Such actions," despaired a high Japanese staff officer in late 1943, "must be discontinued since they will change the attitude of the guerrillas and lead to a dangerous situation."²⁶

The biggest single amnesty drive put on by the Japanese came in October 1943, at the time Philippine "independence" was granted. Military operations were suspended in most areas and such inducements were offered as immunity from punishment and provision of jobs or food. Few Filipino guerrillas surrendered under this program, however. Indeed, the Japanese complained that many guerrillas were taking advantage of the halt in military operations to reorganize and expand; some, in fact, actually carried out attacks on Japanese installations at this time.

Effectiveness of Japanese Tactics

From the Japanese point of view, the total effect of all of these tactics was unsatisfactory. The 14th Army was unable to crush the guerrillas by military means or to control them by any other measures. To be sure, the Japanese killed a large number of Filipinos—how many will never be known—and when they made a serious effort they were able to strike telling blows against individual guerrilla groups or guerrillas operating within certain limited areas. Their most effective tactics included aggressive patrolling and sudden attacks combined with zoning, supported by intelligence gathered primarily through intimidation. But their inability to carry these out on a broad scale, to maintain pressure on the guerrillas, and to secure substantial areas of the Philippines destroyed their chances of crushing the insurgency.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

The Philippine insurgency was ended not by any Japanese countermeasures but rather by the return of American forces to the Islands in the fall and winter of 1944-45. Supported and sustained by the Americans, the larger and stronger guerrilla organizations—now more powerful than they had ever been during the occupation—relied less and less on simple hit-and-run tactics and undertook major, conventional attacks on the Japanese. Sometimes they operated in conjunction with American forces, sometimes independently, with American logistical

backup.²⁷ And while they continued to be referred to as guerrillas, it was clear that for them the insurgency phase of the war was now over.

Japan's failure to destroy the Philippine insurgency was primarily a result of her military weakness in the Islands. It seems evident to the writer that, had the fortunes of war allowed the Japanese to bring in substantial numbers of well-trained and well-supplied troops supported by adequate air and naval power, they could have crushed the divided resistance movement with overwhelming force. Such a step would undoubtedly have engendered hate, but hatred alone could not have defeated the Japanese. And without American assistance the guerrillas would have been impotent.

Rebuilding the Philippines

Even before the Japanese hold on the Philippines had been shattered—in fact, as early as the American invasion of Leyte in October 1944—the Philippine Commonwealth government was reestablished on Philippine soil. Under the Presidency of Sergio Osmena, who had succeeded to that post on the death of Quezon, the new government faced a massive task of rehabilitation and reconstruction. The effects of the Japanese invasion and occupation, the guerrilla warfare, and the final destruction that came during the liberation of the Islands had gravely damaged the Philippine economy. When, on July 4, 1946, the United States granted Philippine independence and Manuel A. Roxas became the first President of the new republic, his initial problem was to restore the economic well-being of the country.

A second problem was the greatly strengthened Communist movement in the Philippines. Having developed a sizable underground and guerrilla organization during the occupation, the Hukbalahaps would be a political and military problem for many years to come.* It would be almost another decade before the government, under the imaginative and efficient leadership of Ramon Magsaysay, would rid the Islands of the Communist menace.

By the late 1950's, however, the Republic of the Philippines had become a healthy and energetic member of the world community. With a revived economy and a strong internal political situation, the young nation was allied in a mutual defense pact with the United States, held a charter membership in the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, and had reestablished commercial and cultural ties with Japan. It firmly believed that its position and experience qualified it to serve as a link between East and West that might eventually bring understanding and an easing of tensions in Southeast Asia.

*For a description of counterinsurgency against the Hukbalahaps, see Chapter 16, "The Philippines (1946-1954)".

NOTES

¹This section is mainly based on Joseph Ralston Hayden, The Philippines: A Study in National Development (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1942); University of Chicago (for Human Relations Area Files, Inc.), The Philippines (Subcontractor's Monograph HRAF-16 Chicago-5; New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, Inc., 1956); and Headquarters, U.S. Army Service Forces, Civil Affairs Handbook: Philippine Islands (Army Service Forces Manual M 365-1, 25 April 1944).

²For the Philippine Communist movement and the Hukbalahap, see also Col. Ismael D. Lopus, "The Communist Huk Enemy," in Counter-Guerrilla Operations in the Philippines, 1946-1953, a seminar on the Huk Campaign held at Fort Bragg, N.C., 15 June 1961 (Fort Bragg, 1961), pp. 11-14.

³The basic source for this section is The Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines (1948), Vol. I of GHQ, USAFPAC, Intelligence Series (9 vols.). A large number of other works deal with particular movements or areas and have also been drawn upon. Among the most useful of these are: for Luzon—R. W. Volckmann, We Remained: Three Years Behind the Enemy Lines in the Philippines (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1954); for Mindanao—John Keats, They Fought Alone (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Company, 1963); for the Visayas—Jose D. Doromal, The War in Panay: A Documentary History of the Resistance Movement in Panay During World War II (Manila: The Diamond Historical Publications, 1952), and Elmer Lear, The Japanese Occupation of the Philippines, Leyte 1941-1945, Data Paper No. 42, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1961). Japanese sources utilized include Office, Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, Japanese Studies in World War II, No. 3, "Philippine Operations Record, Phase II (December 1942-June 1944)," as well as a mass of documents compiled and translated during World War II by the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section (ATIS), GHQ, Southwest Pacific Area, and published by that Section as "Enemy Publications" and "Current Translations." Some of these ATIS documents are reproduced as appendices to The Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines, and most of them, as well as an index, are on file in the World War II Records Division of the National Archives.

⁴For the defense of the Islands, see Louis Morton, The Fall of the Philippines (Washington: Office, Chief of Military History, 1953).

⁵This is based on figures for individual organizations in The Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines, on a tentative total offered in Intelligence Activities in the Philippines During the Japanese Occupation (1948), Vol. II of GHQ, USAFPAC, "Intelligence Series," Plate 27, and on various Japanese estimates scattered throughout ATIS documents. In the latter category, see especially ATIS Enemy Publications, No. 359, Guerrilla Warfare in the Philippines (28 April 1945), I, 18.

⁶For the Huks, see also Lopus, "The Communist Huk Enemy," *loc. cit.*, pp. 13-15; University of Chicago (HRAF), The Philippines, pp. 1200-1206.

⁷For a popular account of the Moros, see Edward M. Kuder, with Pete Martin, "The Philippines Never Surrendered," The Saturday Evening Post, Vol. 217 (February 10, 17, 24, March 3, 10, 1945).

⁸For USAFIP (NL), see Historical Records Section, USAFIP (NL), Guerrilla Days in North Luzon (Camp Spencer, Luna, P.I.: USAFIP, NL, 1946); and Philip Harkins, Blackburn's Headhunters (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1955).

⁹See Col. A. N. Bautista, "East Central Luzon Guerrilla," Military Review, XXV (March 1946), pp. 22-27.

¹⁰For the Marking Guerrillas, see Colonel Yay [Yay Panlilio], The Crucible: An Autobiography (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950).

¹¹Quoted in ATIS Enemy Publications, No. 359, I, 7.

¹²ATIS Enemy Publications, No. 359, I, 58-60.

¹³Robert Ross Smith, Triumph in the Philippines (Washington: Office, Chief of Military History, 1963), pp. 26-27 and passim. Guerrilla intelligence activities are discussed in all of the works cited so far in this section, especially Intelligence Activities in the Philippines During the Japanese Occupation. See also Maj. Gen. Charles A. Willoughby and John Chamberlain, MacArthur, 1941-1951 (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1954), chap. 9; Maj. Gen. Courtney Whitney, MacArthur: His Rendezvous With Destiny (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956) chaps. XII-XIII; Col. Allison Ind, Allied Intelligence Bureau: Our Secret Weapon in the War Against Japan (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1958), chap. 4; Ira Wolfert, American Guerrilla in the Philippines (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945), passim; Lt. Joseph F. St. John, Leyte Calling (New York: Vanguard Press, 1945), passim.

¹⁴For American aid, see citations in footnote 13 and also Travis Ingham, Rendezvous by Submarine (Garden City: Doubleday, Doran, 1945); M. Hamlin Cannon, Leyte: The Return to the Philippines (Washington: Office, Chief of Military History, 1954), pp. 16-20.

¹⁵Office, Chief of Military History, Japanese Studies in World War II, No. 103, "Outline of Administration in Occupied Areas (1942-1945)," pp. 1-40, passim; ASF, Civil Affairs Handbook, I, 48-50, 60-61, 66-68, 81-82, XI-XII, 127-129, 138-141, 146-147; David Bernstein, The Philippine Story (New York: Farrar, Straus and Company, 1947), chap. VIII; Volckmann, We Remained, pp. 104-105; Maj. Jorge A. Sanchez, "Guerrilla Warfare in Luzon," Armored Cavalry Journal, LVI (July-August 1947), p. 28.

¹⁶Material on the effect of the Japanese occupation on the Philippine economy appears in almost every section of ASF, Civil Affairs Handbook. See also Japanese Studies, No. 103, pp. 27-28, 35-40. A brief, general statement of Japanese "Exploitation of Greater East Asia" appears in T. A. Bisson, Japan's War Economy (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1945), pp. 82-89.

¹⁷Japanese Studies, No. 3, passim. October 1944 strength figures are from Cannon, Leyte, p. 93, and Smith, Triumph, passim. General Kuroda made his postwar statement when I interviewed him in June 1947; a transcript of our conversation is in my possession.

¹⁸ATIS Enemy Publications, No. 359, I, 55, "Organization of Filipino Constabulary, 1944," in ATIS Current Translations, No. 147 (2 February 1945), pp. 49-57; Japanese Studies No. 103, pp. 30-31, 35; The Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines, pp. 8, 13, 90, 102; U. of Chicago (HRAF), The Philippines, p. 216; Volckmann, We Remained, pp. 109, 131, 153; Lear, The Japanese Occupation, Leyte, passim.

¹⁹The following discussion of Japanese counterinsurgency strategy and tactics in the Philippines is based in general on material in practically all of the sources cited in this study. Particularly useful are those listed in footnote 3, including all ATIS material.

²⁰ATIS Enemy Publications, No. 188, Subjugation of Central Luzon by 1 Battalion, 141 Infantry Regiment (18 September 1944).

²¹Panlilio, The Crucible, p. 120; Bautista, "East Central Luzon Guerrilla," loc. cit., p. 26.

²²Quoted in Doromal, The War in Panay, p. 97. For this technique and its effects, see especially ibid., chaps. XIII-XIV; ATIS, "An Interim Report on Japanese Atrocities on Prisoners and Civilians," (8 February 1945), pp. 12-16, App. 7 to The Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines; Panlilio, The Crucible, pp. 140-144.

²³For a discussion of factors affecting the behavior of Japanese soldiers in somewhat similar circumstances, see Stanley L. Falk, Bataan: The March of Death (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1962), chap. 20.

²⁴See ASF, Civil Affairs Handbook, I, 61-62.

²⁵ATIS Current Translations, No. 147, pp. 26-27.

²⁶ATIS Current Translations, No. 146 (31 January 1945), p. 36. For Japanese amnesty offers, see also ibid., p. 1; ATIS Current Translations, No. 147, pp. 27-28; Japanese Studies, . . . No. 3, p. 12; Harkins, Blackburn's Headhunters, passim; Volckmann, We Remained, p. 104; Panlilio, The Crucible, pp. 113-114.

²⁷Cannon, Leyte, and Smith, Triumph, both passim.

SELECTED READING

There is need for a comprehensive work on both the Philippine guerrilla movement and the Japanese counterinsurgency. Until such a book is written, however, several of the works cited in this study will provide some indication of what went on during three years of guerrilla warfare in the Philippines.

Most of the research needed is on the Japanese side. The following sources will provide a start:

Allied Translator and Interpreter Section, GHQ, Southwest Pacific Area, "Enemy Publications" and "Current Translations," filed, with an index, in the World War II Records Division, National Archives. A mass of undigested captured Japanese documents in translation, with a rich lode of material, of varying usefulness, relating to the Philippines.

Office, Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, Japanese Studies in World War II, No. 3, "Philippine Operations Record, Phase II (December 1942-June 1944)." A short but useful account of the military aspects of the occupation, prepared after the war by former Japanese Army officers and based on memory and a few documents.

No. 103, "Outline of Administration in Occupied Areas (1942-1954)." A somewhat longer and very useful administrative history of the occupation of Southeast Asia and the Philippines, prepared after the war by former Japanese Army officers, based on memory and some records.

There is considerably more material on the guerrilla side of the story, of which the following are probably the most useful sources:

Bautista, Col. A. N., "East Central Luzon Guerrilla," Military Review, XXV (March 1946), 22-27. A brief but valuable account of the organization and operations of this force, written by a former member.

Doromal, Jose D., The War in Panay: A Documentary History of the Resistance Movement in Panay During World War II. Manila: The Diamond Historical Publications, 1952. A most valuable account of one of the best-organized guerrilla movements in the Philippines, including documentary and statistical appendices, based on records, memory, and interviews.

GHQ, U.S. Army Forces, Pacific, "Intelligence Series" (9 vols.), Vol. I, The Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines (1948), and Vol. II, Intelligence Activities in the Philippines During the Japanese Occupation (1948). Among the most important sources on the guerrilla movement, providing much important organizational and administrative detail as well as valuable material on guerrilla intelligence activities and American support.

Keats, John, They Fought Alone. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Company, 1963. A fictionalized but highly useful account of the guerrilla movement on Mindanao based on the diary and other papers of Col. Wendell W. Fertig, who led the movement.

Lear, Elmer, The Japanese Occupation of the Philippines, Leyte 1941-1945 (Data Paper No. 42, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University). Ithaca: Cornell University, 1961. A

scholarly study of the political, military, and sociological aspects of the resistance movement on Leyte, based on extensive research in the Philippines.

Colonel Yay [Yay, Panlilio], The Crucible. An Autobiography. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950. An account of the Marking Guerrillas, an important Luzon organization, by Marking's wife, herself a guerrilla and his chief of staff. Very informative.

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Part Three
POSTWAR COUNTERINSURGENT
DRAWS OR DEFEATS

INDOCHINA (1946-1954)

INDONESIA (1946-1949)

JAMMU AND KASHMIR (1947-1949)

SOUTH VIET-NAM (1956 to November 1963)

Chapter Nine

**INDOCHINA
1946-1954**

by Bernard L. Fall



FRENCH INDOCHINA (1946-1954)

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INDOCHINA (1946-1954)

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The French in Indochina—their control weakened by wartime concessions that strengthened Vietnamese nationalism—were unable either to parry political or to defeat militarily a capable, determined Communist leadership that perfectly exploited the indigenous desire for independence.

BACKGROUND

The French colonial territory of Indochina, consisting of the present countries of Cambodia, Laos, and the two Viet-Nams, comprised 284,800 square miles and was slightly larger than the State of Texas. Its location in the monsoon zone of Southeast Asia determined to a great extent the techniques of the insurgency that broke out there and the eventual military outcome.

Much of the territory of Indochina lies in the mountains that stretch southeast from the great Himalayas to the South China Sea. The meeting of cool mountain air with moist equatorial winds divides the climate of the whole region into "dry" and "wet" monsoon seasons. The wet period lasts, with some regional and yearly variations, from May until September.

The climate of the area accounts for its tropical vegetation, which extends from the southernmost tip to slightly north of Hanoi, with normal variations for altitude and latitude. In the north, rubber trees do not flourish; in the south, European-type vegetables may be grown, but only where high altitudes permit. Almost 50 percent of the vegetal cover of the area is high-stand jungle, and another 35 percent is bush or 6-foot-high elephant grass. The remainder of the area is lowland rice paddy, swampy for six or more months of the year.

Major river systems divide the area into several distinct regions, almost hermetically separated from each other. The Mekong River—which rises in China and flows between Laos and Thailand and through Cambodia and South Viet-Nam into the South China Sea near Saigon—contains numerous rapids and waterfalls which prevent its use as an avenue of penetration to the interior.* The Mekong is, however, navigable for 8,000-ton vessels as far as Phnom Penh,

*Disappointment over the discovery that the Mekong was not a transportation artery like China's Yellow River almost led to abandonment of Indochina by the French in the 19th century.

making the Cambodian capital an inland seaport. The Red River in North Viet-Nam is accessible to LCT-type vessels almost to the Chinese border, so that this river is both economically and militarily useful.

Geographically, the Indochinese area consists of the coastal deltas of the Red River, the Mekong, and central Vietnamese rivers; the valleys of the Red River and the Mekong, and their tributaries; the Annamite mountain range and its various plateau outcroppings, which form much of the boundary between Laos, Viet-Nam, and Cambodia; and the Thai highlands, which cover most of northern Indochina. There are no natural east-west communication routes: Viet-Nam is oriented toward the coast; Laos and Cambodia toward the Mekong valley.

Ethnic and Religious Diversity

The area is ethnically diverse.¹ The Vietnamese originally migrated from southern China in 250 B.C.; the Cambodians came from Malaya and Tibet in 300 A.D.; and the Laotians moved from China in the 13th century. The Vietnamese remained in the northern parts of Viet-Nam until the 17th century, when settlers and pioneers pushing south along the coast achieved a breakthrough into the lower Mekong Delta, after a series of long and costly wars with the Cambodians. In the various wars and population moves, the aboriginal cultures, probably of Malayo-Polynesian origin, were largely wiped out or forced into the upland areas; they are represented today only by the mountain tribes or montagnards.

The montagnards have been variously estimated to include some 1.2 million aboriginal tribesmen living in the Annamite cordillera and southern plateau of South Viet-Nam, Cambodia, and southern Laos, and another 3 million aborigines inhabiting the Thai highlands of North Viet-Nam and northern Laos. Comprising scores of distinct ethnic and linguistic groups, these hill tribes include the Rhadé, Jarai, Bahnar, and Sedang in the southern area; and in the north, the large Thai group and the Muong, Man, and Meo peoples. Subgroups of the Thai people—the Tho, Nung, and White and Black Thai tribesmen—were often employed by the French as local militia for police and border patrol duties. These montagnards generally resented the lowland-controlled governments. The French colonial administration, on the other hand, was rather well-liked by the mountaineers in view of its paternal protection of the latter against lowlander encroachments.

Of the 36 million people living in Indochina in 1954, probably fewer than 4 million lived in the vast highlands which make up more than 75 percent of the country's territory. These uplanders, mainly montagnards, were first of all hunters and only secondarily growers of crops. Many were seminomadic. About 90 percent of all Cambodians, Laotians, and Vietnamese lived at altitudes under 1,000 feet, where the principal occupation was the growing of irrigated rice.

The name "Indochina" describes the meeting place of Indian and Chinese cultures in this area. The mountains of the Annamite cordillera provided for a division between Indochina's

"Hinduized" and "Sinicized" cultures. Laos and Cambodia were dominated by the Hinayana or "Lesser Vehicle" form of Buddhism which, emanating from Ceylon, has influenced Burma and Thailand as well. Viet-Nam was deeply marked by Chinese influences, including Confucianism, Mahayana or "Greater Vehicle" Buddhism, Chinese script, and the Chinese tendency toward tight social organization.

Although the Buddhist faith stresses nonviolence, as does Christianity, the Buddhist countries have often fought bitter and bloody wars. Confucianism's moderating influence on war and bodily violence has also been insignificant. All three countries provided excellent troops for the tirailleur (infantry) battalions of the French colonial army, and those from the mountain areas and from northern Viet-Nam were particularly prized. Some 80,000 Indochinese troops participated in trench warfare in World War I. In fact, quite a few scions of ruling families chose a military career as one means of attaining equality with the French.

Colonial Economic Policies Breed Resentment

The economic structure of French Indochina was typically colonial, geared to provide raw materials for the home country and a market for France's manufactured goods. Indochina was amply qualified for the former role, but it failed in the latter. Throughout most of the colonial period, Indochina exported far more to France than it bought, and France was never its exclusive source of finished products. France's attempt to maintain Indochina almost exclusively as a source of raw materials led to a distortion of the economic process and had an obvious influence on the country's socioeconomic structure.²

The allocation of vast landholdings to French agricultural concerns created a floating rural proletariat whose livelihood was at the mercy of world market fluctuations. Thus, the great depression of the 1930's brought about large-scale unemployment of plantation workers. Uprooted from their native village society, these rural workers were willing to listen to any promises of radical improvement.

The failure to create local industries until very late in the colonial period, including the failure to realize that greater colonial purchasing power would in itself increase imports, left Indochina at the mercy of commercial monopolies which supplied the Indochinese economy with imported goods at prices far above the world market. The colony was deprived of many essential goods when normal trade currents were interrupted during World War II.

Colonial revenues derived from the salt and tobacco monopolies granted by the French to favored persons were bitterly resented by the Indochinese, and those drawn from alcohol and opium sales were construed as profits from a deliberate design to degrade and harm Asians. Inequality in job opportunities and the salaries paid to French-trained local elites also caused general resentment, as did the domination of the economy by Frenchmen and Chinese. In turn, the dominating role of Vietnamese merchants in the even weaker Laotian and Cambodian

economies was resented in these latter states, where it was felt that the Vietnamese looked down upon the indigenous peoples—as, in fact, they often did. Although labor conditions in Indochina were cited by the League of Nations International Labor Bureau as models in terms of working hours, limits on child labor, and social security, the fact that no legal trade unions existed—and thus no organized system for the airing of grievances—gave rise to a great deal of underground organizing to the profit of the Communists, who were most skilled in that kind of activity.

Government and Politics Under the French

The key factor leading to the 1946 insurgency in Indochina was political in nature and derived from the imposition of an alien colonial regime upon a highly nationalistic and resistant population.

The colonial federation of French Indochina comprised the protectorates of Cambodia and Laos, which France had governed since 1863 and 1893 respectively, and the three Vietnamese territories of Cochin China, annexed by France in 1862, and Annam and Tonkin, which the French had ruled as protectorates since the 1880's. Cochin China, comprising the Mekong Delta and Saigon region of the present South Viet-Nam, was the area of greatest French penetration and influence. Most of the 40,000 French settlers in Indochina at the beginning of World War II were concentrated in Cochin China.

The colonial structure of government which France had created in Indochina was, in actual practice, fairly thin. During 1930-40, the last decade of peacetime administration, this vast territory was controlled by about 20,000 civil servants, 10,000 policemen, and 30,000 troops. Vast mountain stretches in northern Laos and Tonkin were under military administration, with a small staff of district officers representing the French overlay upon the indigenous feudal chieftain structure. Direct colonial administration, and hence a higher density of French officials, could be found only in those territories annexed by France: Cochin China and the city-enclaves of Tourane, Haiphong, and Hanoi. In addition, lowland Tonkin and southern Laos, though legally protectorates, were in fact administered as colonies.

French political control was absolute, and there was little, if any, attempt to include local elites in shaping the destiny of Indochina. The titular sovereigns of Cambodia, Luang-Prabang (Laos), and Annam retained some importance in the cultural ceremonies of their countries, but they were summarily removed when they sought to gain actual control of any part of the administrative machinery. There existed, for all to see, the glaring difference between the political roles of the French minority and the vast Asian majority.

Although French citizens of any race could—and did—participate in the local Indochinese branches of metropolitan French parties, Indochinese political parties advocating nationalist objectives were generally forbidden. However, a Vietnamese or Laotian, who would have been

severely punished for political activities at home, could engage in such activities with the constitutional guarantees in France itself. This somewhat schizophrenic approach has plagued other colonial powers, but whereas in other places radical political ideas have had only a few followers, the French Communist Party, with its traditional anticolonial policies, represented at least one-third of the French electorate of the prewar era and was particularly strong among students and workers—the two categories to which Indochinese living in France were most likely to belong. Even in Saigon, there existed a cell of the French Communist Party.³

Political Parties and Communism in Indochina

Inside Indochina, indigenous parties, both Communist and non-Communist, operated—sometimes openly, but clandestinely when necessary. The non-Communist nationalist parties were made up chiefly of Confucian mandarins* or other upper class groups, and so found it difficult to develop a mass base. In many cases, they did not even look for one, but rather preferred to use the conspiratorial approach familiar to them from Chinese-type secret societies. Vietnamese nationalists who were not Communist-oriented were likely to be members of the Viet-Nam Quoc-Dan Dang (VNQDD), a nationalistic Socialist party influenced by China's Kuomintang, or the Dai Viet (Greater Viet-Nam) Party, a right-wing nationalist group, or the pro-Fascist Viet-Nam Phuc-Quoc Hoi, a conservative party founded in the 1930's.

The only indigenous political group in Indochina which made a deliberate and concentrated effort at gaining a mass base was the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP), created in 1930. It had both the outside organizational support (from the U.S.S.R., France, and China) and the ability in terms of trained cadres to create a nationwide movement. The ICP was always predominantly Vietnamese in composition and leadership, although Cambodians and Laotians were included in the membership.⁴

The ICP at first made grievous mistakes. Its leaders were repeatedly depleted by the French Sûreté in Indochina—probably one of the most efficient political police forces of its time. But the party also learned from its errors, and patiently rebuilt its organizational structure, trained its personnel, and went on with its work. The core of the present-day leadership of Vietnamese communism still dates from that difficult period in the 1930's.⁵

There were two abortive revolts against the French in this decade, once in 1930 and again in 1940, in which the Vietnamese Communists were involved. The Yen Bay revolt in 1930, led by the VNQDD, resulted in the elimination of many of its leaders and thus actually aided the Communists. The 1940 uprising taught the ICP a lesson about premature action, and also cleared the ranks of a number of Trotskyite Communists in Cochinchina.

*Vietnamese mandarins were civil servants schooled in the Chinese classics and Vietnamese traditionalism, who served in the imperial bureaucracy of local administration.

Japan Challenges French Position in Asia

World War II (1939-45) shattered the image of French authority in Indochina and destroyed the substance of European colonial rule over the country. The German defeat of France in June 1940 and the ensuing armistice between Germany and the pro-Axis Vichy French regime opened Indochina to Japanese penetration and exploitation. On September 22, 1940, Japanese forces, after crushing local French forces at the Chinese-Tonkin border, landed at Haiphong and proceeded to occupy strategic points throughout the country. In January 1941, Thailand, Japan's only Asian ally, invaded Laos and Cambodia in a brief undeclared war which Japan "mediated" by forcing France to cede certain border provinces to Thailand.

Indochina was thus firmly in the Japanese sphere long before the Pacific war began, although France remained the nominal sovereign of the territory and French colonial administrators remained at their posts. The Japanese were chiefly interested in the economic resources of Indochina and did not want to undertake direct administration at this time. Adm. Jean Decoux, the Vichy Governor-General of Indochina, cooperated with the Japanese since the international situation seemed to offer him no other alternative, in the hope that French authority could eventually be fully restored.

Admiral Decoux realized that the 35,000 Japanese stationed in Indochina played a critical role in relations between the French and Indochinese. As a result of Japanese rivalry for Indochinese favor, Decoux was forced into making constant concessions. During this period, the Governor-General offered the Indochinese increased educational opportunities, supported a youth movement, ended job and salary discrimination against Asians, developed industry, promulgated the idea of an Indochinese federation, and opened the way for an indigenous majority in the federal council. At the same time, Decoux attempted to restrict the growth of nationalism and to grant positions of control only to the conservative traditionalist elites. Nonetheless, the result of his concessions was to stimulate, not to dim, Vietnamese nationalism. This ambiguous period of Franco-Japanese "cooperation" lasted until March 9, 1945, when the Japanese arrested all French officials and civilians in the country and destroyed all the French military forces except those able to fight their way north to Allied lines in China or to hold out in the wilds of Laos.

The Japanese now moved to replace the French. In a gesture toward Vietnamese nationalism, they installed the Emperor Bao Dai, traditional ruler at Hué in Annam (central Viet-Nam), as head of an "independent" Vietnamese state comprising Annam and Tonkin in the north. The Japanese, however, continued French policy with regard to Cochinchina, the third integral and most prosperous part of Viet-Nam, administering it directly as a colony. In the last days of the war, the Japanese acceded to Vietnamese demands and allowed Cochinchina to join Bao Dai's kingdom. Thus in August 1945, Viet-Nam regained its precolonial 1858 boundaries.³

Communists Organize Viet Minh

Most of the leaders of the ICP had fled to China when the 1910 uprising were crushed, and in May 1941 they had organized, under Chinese auspices, a Communist front called the Viet-Nam Doc-Lap Dong-Minh Hoi (Vietnamese Revolutionary Independence League), or Viet Minh. With more than a decade of experience in underground organization and quasi-legal political activity, the ICP stood ready to take full advantage of the World War II situation. By late 1943, Viet Minh guerrillas and underground agents were operating in Tonkin, and on December 22, 1944, the Vietnamese Communist and nationalist leader Vo Nguyen Giap created the first unit of the Viet-Nam People's Army (VPA).

When the Japanese dissolution of French colonial forces early in 1945 deprived the Allies of an intelligence apparatus inside Indochina, American Office of Strategic Services (OSS) teams were parachuted in to work with the Viet Minh, and British Force 136 began operations in support of resistance groups in the south. Viet Minh guerrillas consistently avoided any massive contact with Japanese forces, however, preferring not to grapple with an enemy who was bound to be soon leaving as the fortunes of war turned against it, and devoted this time to perfecting the Communist political control network throughout the countryside.⁹

Viet Minh Set Up Government and Challenge French Return

On August 14, 1945, Japan surrendered to the Allied Forces. According to Allied agreements at Potsdam, the surrender of Japanese troops in Indochina was to be effected by British and Chinese occupation forces, with the 16th parallel serving as the dividing line between the two occupation zones. Before the Allies could arrive, however, the Viet Minh proclaimed Vietnamese independence from France and set up the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam (DRVN) in Hanoi. By mid-September 1945, when non-Communist Vietnamese nationalists arrived in the baggage trains of the Chinese Nationalist occupation forces, the Viet Minh had already assumed effective control of Hanoi and much of the countryside. In Tonkin and northern Annam the DRVN actually functioned as a de facto government for more than a year after the war ended.

In the south, where the Viet Minh was weaker and where British occupation forces had promptly released imprisoned French forces, the DRVN was unable to gain a solid foothold. Quickly driven out of Saigon and other administrative centers south of the 16th parallel by the French, the Viet Minh could operate only a shadow government in the south.

The French, firmly established in the south, found it expedient to negotiate with the DRVN regime in the north, since they considered it less dangerous to long-term French interests than the Chinese Nationalists, whom they suspected of attempting to install a puppet regime of pro-Chinese Vietnamese nationalists. The agreement of March 6, 1946, whereby the French returned to the north, recognized the DRVN as a "Free State" within the Indochinese Federation.

and the French Union, with its own national assembly, its own armed forces, and its own finances. Cochinchina was to decide by plebiscite whether or not to join the Hanoi-based DRVN. This agreement further added to the prestige of the Hanoi regime, and as the Chinese withdrew from Indochina on March 6, the Viet Minh was solidly entrenched and a form of dual government then prevailed in Vietnamese territory. Thus, the Communists had won their first major victory in Indochina almost without firing a shot.

Negotiations Fail and Events Turn to Violence

Differences between French and Viet Minh forces soon developed, however. The French proceeded to set up a separate administration for the central Vietnamese highlands. Their authorities in Saigon encouraged the establishment of an autonomous republic in Cochinchina, despite their earlier commitment to a plebiscite. Lack of coordination and control by French authorities in Paris over their forces in Indochina was a major factor in the deterioration of Franco-Vietnamese relations. High Commissioner Admiral Thierry d'Argenlieu, temperamentally ill-suited to deal with the complexities of the situation, constantly resorted to measures which drove Vietnamese moderates into the arms of the Viet Minh.

Negotiations dragged on throughout the summer of 1946. Ho Chi Minh, President of the DRVN and the leading exponent of Vietnamese independence, as well as the founding father of the Indochinese Communist movement, headed the Vietnamese delegation sent to France to negotiate for recognition of a unified and independent Viet-Nam under DRVN control. By September, the Fontainebleau Conference had ended inconclusively and the Vietnamese leaders returned to Hanoi to prepare for action of a different sort. Relations between French and DRVN officials went from bad to worse. In November, shooting broke out in Haiphong, and the French responded by bombarding the city, killing several thousand Vietnamese. The DRVN reacted to the Haiphong incident by attacking French garrisons on December 19, 1946, and the military phase of the revolution had begun.¹⁰

INSURGENCY

Although the military phase of the insurgency did not begin until the end of 1946, its political phase had begun well before the end of World War II. Through propaganda and indoctrination efforts begun in 1943, the Viet Minh had gained political control of many villages in Tonkin, particularly in the Viet Bac region along the Chinese border. In August 1945, the Viet Minh had another political success. Emperor Bao Dai, whom the Japanese had installed a few months earlier as head of an "independent" Vietnamese state, decided to abdicate in favor of the Viet Minh, which this weak but nationalistic monarch believed to be a genuine nationalist movement. On August 25, Bao Dai had handed over the imperial seal and other symbols of authority to Ho

Chi Minh, thus conferring a semblance of legitimacy, particularly in terms of Vietnamese tradition, on the DRVN regime, which was formally proclaimed by the Viet Minh on September 2, 1945. On that day, Ho Chi Minh began his address to the crowds in words well-known to another people: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal . . ." It was from the Japanese, Ho stated, that independence had been won, because "since the autumn of 1940, our country ceased to be a French colony . . ."

The Communist-dominated nationalist regime made excellent use of its position as the de facto government north of the 16th parallel—which included Tonkin and part of Annam—to gain popular support and eliminate its non-Communist nationalist rivals, by either fair means or foul. Elections for a national constituent assembly representing all of Viet-Nam were held in January 1946. These elections were conducted openly in the north and held illegally even in French-controlled areas. They resulted in a clear majority for the Viet Minh coalition, which represented both popular support and Communist manipulation. Conservative parties, allocated 70 seats out of 440 even before the election, charged afterwards that these elections were fraudulent—which obviously they were.

Posing as a broadly based nationalist government and de-emphasizing the Communist ideology of its leadership, the DRVN abolished the traditional mandarin and councils of village notables and replaced them with people's committees, often headed by non-Communists but controlled by the Viet Minh; it abolished unpopular taxes and the opium and alcohol monopolies; and it initiated a crash project to eliminate illiteracy. The regime named ex-Emperor Bao Dai and Monsignor Le Huu Tu as Supreme Advisers to President Ho Chi Minh, in order to win traditionalist and Catholic support for the DRVN. Even earlier, on November 11, 1945, the ICP had dissolved itself in order to permit its members to operate more freely as Viet Minh nationalists and to conceal the Communist affiliation of DRVN officials. Some observers even averred that there were now no Communists on the Viet Minh side.

Ho Chi Minh Emerges

The real bonus between the ICP, the Viet Minh, and the DRVN regime were betrayed, however, by the fact that the leader of all three was the same—Ho Chi Minh. The DRVN President had been an active agent of international communism for over 20 years. Known as Nguyen Ai Quoc until the 1940's, Ho was born May 19, 1890, in the north central province of Nghe An.* He was reared in an atmosphere of nationalist agitation and mandarin intrigue; his father, a mandarin, had been dismissed by the French, reportedly for political activity. Ho left Indochina when he was about 20, working as a cabin boy on a French merchant ship. Finally, after a variety

*There has been some doubt as to the exact date of birth of the North Vietnamese leader. The date used in this paper is that given to the author by Ho Chi Minh himself, in an interview in Hanoi in July 1962.

of jobs in several countries, including a stint as a pastry cook at the Carlton Hotel in London, he became a photographer's assistant in Paris. Here he came into contact with other Vietnamese nationalists and developed a great interest in politics.

The political career of Ho Chi Minh (He Who Enlightens) dates from the 1923 Socialist Congress of Tours, where he joined the ultra-left faction which later organized itself into the French Communist Party. After a few years in Moscow, where he studied Communist ideology and revolutionary strategy and tactics, Ho Chi Minh returned to the Orient as a Comintern agent. Throughout the 1930's he was active in the Vietnamese Communist movement, although he spent most of the decade in exile in Hong Kong and South China. Returning to Viet-Nam around the end of World War II at the head of the Viet Minh, Ho Chi Minh appeared to most Vietnamese nationalists as the "old man" of the independence movement. His pictures appeared wherever the Viet Minh held sway, and candidates in the January 1946 elections found it a distinct political asset to be identified as a friend or companion of "Uncle Ho," as the insurgent leader was affectionately termed.¹²

Organization Strengths and Casualties

When the insurgency broke out in late 1946, civilian and military local authorities were merged into Committees for Resistance and Administration (UBKC/HC). Larger units of administration than the province were created: the zone (khu); and the interzone (lien-khu, or LK), which was the equivalent of a corps area. At LK level, military and civilian heads worked out all problems together, with ultimate responsibility resting with the LK's political commissar.

On the military side, the Viet-Nam People's Army (VPA) at first copied the French quaternary organization: 2,500-man regiments of four battalions, including a heavy weapons or artillery unit. By 1949, 5,000-man brigades appeared, and by late 1950, 10,000-man ternary divisions. Later a Russian-model "heavy division" appeared, with two field artillery regiments, one combat engineer regiment, an antiaircraft battalion, and the usual service units.

The DRVN saw to it that its units were ethnically homogeneous, at least at the regimental level. Thus the 308th Division was known as the "capital division" because of its Hanoi recruitment, while the 316th was largely of Tho tribal origin and the 335th of Thai tribal origin. Regiment 120 was H're; 803, Jarai. In this way, a unit could be fairly sure of being well received and perfectly at home in at least one area.

Communist forces started with a strength of about 60,000 men in 1946 and ended the insurgency with close to 380,000 men, of whom fewer than 120,000 were regulars. Their total casualties will no doubt be forever unknown, since it is impossible to tell a dead peasant from a dead guerrilla and since the Viet Minh made a habit of carrying off casualties, precisely to prevent their being correctly estimated. But such battles as that of Vinh-Yen in 1951 cost the Viet

Minh 6,000 casualties and that of Dien Bien Phu 22,000, total casualties were beyond a doubt not far from 500,000, or about three times those of the French Union Forces.¹³

General Giap

The commander in chief of the VPA was Vo Nguyen Giap, a great admirer of Mao Tse-tung, who adapted Mao's concepts of revolutionary warfare tactics to Indochina. Son of a scholar of modest means, Giap was educated at the Lycée National in Hué, the traditional capital. Involved in various nationalist movements in the 1920's and early 1930's, he joined the ICP about 1937. Until 1940, he was a history professor in Hanoi. He is said to have never forgiven the French for the death of his wife in a French prison in 1943. Ho Chi Minh put him in charge of training a guerrilla force during World War II, and by the end of the war, Giap was second only to Ho Chi Minh in the Communist movement in Indochina.¹⁴

Regulars, Regionals, and Locals

In terms of mission, three echelons made their appearance in the VPA by 1947; the first-line regulars, or main force (chu-luc); the regional units (dia-phuong quan); and the local militia (du-kich). Of these, only the chu-luc was fully mobile, being likely to show up in combat anywhere from the Chinese border to northern Cambodia. With almost no exceptions, the men covered these vast distances on foot, carrying full battle kit. The Viet Minh forces consistently outpaced French estimates of their mobility; jungle dashes of 25 miles a day for several consecutive days were not unknown. Viet Minh regulars were sparingly used and were reserved for battles of strategic importance; but when the target was worthwhile—as, for example, the liquidation of French forces on the Chinese border in 1950, or the attempted capture of Hanoi in 1951, or the battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954—they were fully committed regardless of casualties.

The brunt of everyday battle was borne by the regionals, reinforced by local militia in the area of attack. This was particularly true in areas where a frontline existed, as in the Red River Delta, or where no regular forces of any size existed, as in Cochinchina. Although two regiments of regulars were infiltrated inside the Red River Delta and its "Marshal de Lattre" fortified line of 2,200 bunkers, most small attacks were carried out by the regionals. The local militia was used chiefly in reconnaissance for larger units unfamiliar with the terrain, or in covering the withdrawal of such units; it also played an important role in gathering local intelligence and in preparing ambushes and in sabotage.

"Armed Propaganda" Units

The insurgents' military effort was ably assisted by a psychological warfare and intelligence operation of major proportions. Special Viet Minh teams and units known as di-ho-van

... more systematically "armed propaganda" were used to penetrate villages and French posts in order to gather intelligence and prepare the way for insurgent attack. There were also dich-van teams in charge of assassinating officials who refused to collaborate with the Viet Minh. The most notable such coup was the simultaneous murder in August 1951 of French General Chanson and South Vietnamese Regional Governor Thai Lap Thanh by a "suicide volunteer" booby-trapped with hand grenades.

Five Phases of Insurgent Operations

The Viet Minh's combat operations against the French fell into five major phases. The first of these was "beachhead elimination," an ill-fated attempt at throwing the French into the sea before they could get a solid foothold in Viet-Nam (December 1946-March 1947). During this phase, the DRVN forces tended to stand and fight, apparently expecting to throw out the French by regular combat tactics. They used available French, Japanese, and U.S. equipment, including artillery and even 18 tanks. Many Japanese instructors and even some German Nazis fleeing from China were with the insurgents.¹⁵ Although this first conventional effort failed, it did produce such remarkable feats as a successful defense of one sector of Hanoi for almost three months by a DRVN regiment.

It was only after this failure—not as part of a deliberate design—that the DRVN switched to guerrilla warfare. Its forces had run out of both ammunition and spare parts for its more sophisticated weapons, and this practical fact had a great deal more to do with the decision than any of Mao Tse-tung's famous writings on revolutionary war. In fact, the DRVN's armed forces had never forgotten one of Mao's less-quoted but nevertheless crucial maxims warning against the false belief that guerrilla warfare solves everything and calling, rather, for armed forces that were light on their feet, could hit hard, and could get away fast.¹⁶

After the collapse of talks with the French in March 1947, the Viet Minh finally realized it must expect a protracted conflict and must, accordingly, create some relatively secure bases, and, if possible, establish permanent contact with a sanctuary. The second period was therefore one of "containment and consolidation." In several limited offensives, the Viet Minh cleared a redoubt in northwestern Tonkin, crushed the French border positions, and thus established permanent contact with Red China. It was able to train and equip its regulars there by the time this phase ended in October 1950.

The third phase, later termed the "erroneous general counteroffensive," followed next, with multidivision attacks against French lowland positions in the spring of 1951. This offensive failed when the French air-transported reinforcements and U.S. equipment to break up massed Viet Minh attacks in the Red River Delta zone. An insufficiently prepared attack against the Thai highlands, after initial successes, also failed when attempts at storming the French air-borne stronghold at Na San met defeat, with heavy Viet Minh casualties. On the other hand, two

deep stabs by the French at Hoa-Binh and Phu-Doan enabled the Viet Minh to study in detail the weaknesses of French motorized forces in the face of guerrilla type hit-and-run attacks.

The Viet Minh next began a fourth or "strategic defensive" phase with small but effective stabs deep into French held areas. This included offensives into northern Laos in the winter of 1953 and into southern Laos and the southern plateau in the spring of 1954. These operations were meant to deplete French reserves and strain their logistical system, while building up the insurgents' regular forces.

The fifth and final phase of "general counteroffensive" was a series of brief but brutal, large-scale attacks made for the purpose of destroying a maximum of French troops. Dien Bien Phu and the battle for the Red River Delta were highlights of this period, which ended when French and Viet Minh forces signed a cease-fire agreement in Geneva, on July 20, 1954.

Viet Minh Reaction to Error

Although guided by leaders who had learned their job in French, Chinese Nationalist, and Chinese Communist schools, the VPA sometimes made grievous mistakes, such as its three abortive offensives in 1951 against the French-held Red River Delta—but it always corrected these with alacrity. The removal of incompetent commanders was ruthlessly practiced. For example, when the VPA regional commander in Cochín China, Nguyen Binh, failed to revert to small-unit tactics when ordered to do so in 1952, he was ordered back to North Viet-Nam; but his whereabouts were allegedly made known to the French, who in any event intercepted and killed him. The Communist method of "self-criticism" and "comradely criticism" of others may have contributed to the VPA's efficiency. The VPA proved to be a great deal more flexible tactically and strategically than has been generally believed. The decision to revert to low-level attacks when big-unit operations failed may have been the critical decision of the Viet Minh campaign.

Foreign Assistance and Sanctuary

There can be no doubt that external aid was crucial to the insurgents' eventual success. The aid given in 1945-46 to DRVN forces by Chinese Nationalists, Japanese deserters, and even American OSS teams and the Combat Section, South China Command, under Brig. Gen. Philip E. Gallagher, was crucial in the early days. In addition, until late 1947, there was a steady flow of U.S. equipment smuggled in by private aircraft and vessels from the Philippines, in exchange for gold and opium. These craft were finally attacked without warning by the French and destroyed, thus ending this source of Viet Minh supply.¹⁰ There is no way of estimating the size or kind of equipment which reached the Viet Minh from such miscellaneous sources.

Foreign aid to the Viet Minh began to play a really effective role only after 1950, when Red Chinese deliveries permitted the equipment of a first wave of 26 battalions. The bulk of these forces was trained in Red China at Ching-Hsi (Kwangsi Province). Red Chinese aid, coming by

known routes, could be fairly closely estimated. French intelligence sources stated that about 75 percent of Chinese aid consisted of fuel and ammunition, 25 percent of weapons and other equipment. Deliveries went from 10-20 tons a month in 1951 to 250 tons a month by the end of 1952, to 400-600 tons a month in 1953, and to a peak of 1,500-4,000 tons a month between January and June 1954.¹⁸

Soviet bloc and French Communist aid to the Viet Minh was important in both the economic and political fields. It was estimated that in 1950, almost 40 percent of the vehicles sent to French forces in Indochina from France were sabotaged, and reputedly even equipment delivered from American west coast ports was not exempt from Communist tampering. Funds for the Viet Minh were collected in most Soviet satellites and by French Communists. For propaganda purposes, the U.S.S.R. repatriated captured German members of the French Foreign Legion to East Berlin; Czechoslovakia mailed letters and propaganda newspapers from French prisoners of war to their families in France. The insurgents were also aided by neutral India's policy of forbidding the overflight of her territory by French transport aircraft. All of these activities helped the insurgents, particularly the last, which affected indirectly the course of the battle of Dien Bien Phu.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

Even before the general outbreak of armed insurgency in late 1946, there was already a deep split concerning the Vietnamese situation between France's military and civilian leadership in Indochina. For the most part, the French underestimated the seriousness of the Viet Minh challenge and failed to understand the depth and intensity of Vietnamese nationalist sentiment. Gen. Philippe Leclerc, the commander of French forces in Indochina from October 1945 to July 1946, realized that the returning French were up against a popular movement which would be difficult to defeat militarily, and he was also keenly aware of the numerical weakness of French forces in the country. On the other hand, Admiral d'Argenlieu, France's civilian High Commissioner to Indochina stationed in Saigon and a firm believer in tough colonial policies, discounted the seriousness of the situation. Backed by the old-line "Indochina hands" of the colonial civil service in Saigon, d'Argenlieu's views prevailed over those of Leclerc.

Postwar Return of French

The mission of Leclerc's French Expeditionary Corps (FEC)* was thus regarded simply as one of "pacification," to be conducted along the classic lines of France's earlier colonial wars. What actually occurred was a series of flag marches through Viet Minh territory, with columns

*Corps Expéditionnaire Français d'Extrême-Orient (CEFEO).

of tanks and personnel carriers moving rapidly from town to town but never meeting the enemy head-on and with no plans—or military capability—for occupation in depth. Within a few months, much of what the French still regarded as Cochinchina was once more under French control—to the extent of about 100 yards on either side of all major roads. The lack of Vietnamese resistance in the face of French armored columns was interpreted as a sign of submission, and the Viet Minh's continued killing of local officials was believed to be merely a sign of temporary lawlessness in the countryside.¹⁹

However, when negotiations at Fontainebleau broke down and tension between French and DRVN forces in the north began mounting in the fall of 1946, incidents increased and the true dimensions of the Viet Minh problem in the countryside became apparent. When open hostilities broke out in December 1946, they were greeted with almost a sigh of relief. At last the enemy had come into the open and was behaving in a conventional manner. The French response was likewise conventional.

French Strength and Equipment

The FEC then had at its disposal one infantry division at full strength and an armored combat command, two parachute battalions, and about three Spitfire fighter squadrons. Miscellaneous French units reconstituted from prisoners of war liberated from Japanese concentration camps accounted for about three regiments, some of which contained indigenous troops. The total number of troops available in Indochina at the beginning of 1947 was about 40,000; by the end of that year there were some 70,000. Only the paratroops, two companies of which had liberated all of Laos in a series of lightning raids, could be considered suitable for counterinsurgency operations in the jungle. The remainder were useful only for conventional warfare.

Originally, the French forces were armed with U.S. equipment, most of which had been heavily used for three years in World War II, with stocks left behind by British troops who had landed in southern Indochina in September 1945, and with miscellaneous French and Japanese weapons. One French survey indicated that there were in Indochina 36 types of submachineguns, 33 types of rifles, 17 types of light machineguns, and 16 types of mortars.

Foreign Aid for the French

Foreign aid to the French continued throughout the years of the conflict. Friendly cooperation between Britain and France existed in the form of officer exchanges and limited equipment grants. But the bulk of foreign assistance came after June 1950, when the United States decided to support France. The U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) Viet-Nam was activated at this time, and by mid-1954, about \$1 billion worth of equipment had been delivered to the French, including 23,000 trucks, 27,000 other vehicles (among these almost 1,000 armored vehicles), 150 vessels of all types up to aircraft carriers, and over 500 aircraft. While certain

shortages existed, such as helicopters, recoilless rifles, and signal equipment, the magnitude of American assistance made the French forces in Indochina a well-equipped conventional force. An American civilian aid program, also started in 1950, did its share in backing up the French pacification effort, which took the form of routine civic action programs including some resettlement.²⁰

French Search for a Strategy

The fact that the Viet Minh originally tried to defend fixed objectives, most of which the French took without great difficulty, gave the appearance of at least limited French success in the first sequence of events. The French appeared to be stymied chiefly by their lack of troops and supplies.²¹ In 1947, the FEC began large pincer operations, some of which, such as Operation LEA, involved 20,000 troops of all services. These were designed to capture or destroy the bulk of the Viet Minh's regular troops and the DRVN governmental apparatus then in hiding around Tuyen-Quang. While the statistics on Viet Minh casualties lent each French operation the appearance of victory, none ever achieved the basic objective of destroying the enemy's means of maintaining political and military resistance. For the French, the Indochina War became an unending search for the "set-piece battle."

French Organisation and Strength

When, after 1949, in political developments to be discussed later, France gave the three Indochinese countries technical independence, it also created national armies for Cambodia, Laos, and Viet-Nam. Some, but not all, of the indigenous troops serving with the FEC were transferred into these national armies, and military schools were set up in each country to provide native officer cadres—though in insufficient numbers for these national forces. The high command of these French Union Forces (FUF) controlled both the French and African regulars of the FEC and the three national Indochinese armies. This organizational structure remained in effect until after the 1954 cease-fire, except in the case of Cambodia, where the Cambodian Army high command took full administrative control over the Royal Khmer Forces as early as October 1953. By 1954, FEC forces totaled 278,000 and national components, about 200,000.

Slowly, French tactical organization went through a series of modifications to adapt itself to the terrain and the enemy it would have to fight. From divisions of the European type, the FEC in 1949 went to the other extreme, with battalions that were not strong enough to withstand attack by the enemy's basic large unit, the brigade.

General de Lattre Organizes Groupe Mobile

French tactical organization was to be radically revised by Gen. Jean de Lattre de Tassigny, who took over in 1950 as commander in chief of the French Union Forces. Imperious

and commanding - known as "le roi Jean" - de Lattre set the "tone" of the theater until he left in late 1951 to die of cancer and be posthumously awarded the rank of field marshal. He was given to demanding all the honors of ceremony and was known to have fired the area commander of Hanoi for deficiencies in his honor guard. At the same time, de Lattre was also highly practical. He drafted French civilians in Indochina for guard duties and commandeered civilian aircraft in Saigon for troop transport. During battle, he once flew into a small endangered outpost and answered a subordinate commander's radioed reminder of his danger with, "Well, break through and get me out."²²

In 1951, General de Lattre developed the standard unit for the Indochina conflict, the groupe mobile (GM), a ternary regimental combat team organized to operate independently. It existed both as a mobile infantry unit and as an armored unit, and late in 1952 it even appeared in an airborne version, of which there were finally one Vietnamese and two French units, with a total of nine battalions. However, the appearance of two or three jointly operating Viet Minh divisions compelled the French to operate in larger GM formations in 1953-54, and light divisions were in the process of being reintroduced when the war ended. There also existed four provisional divisions de marche in Tonkin, formed from the available GM's.

Montagnards and Paramilitary Forces

The French also used montagnard forces in the northern highlands of Laos and Viet-Nam and on the southern plateau of Viet-Nam. There was a regimental combat team (groupe mobile No. 42) made up of Bahnar and Rhadé tribesmen, a 4th Vietnamese Mountain Division, created in 1951; and the famous 5th Division, made up of northern Nungs. The montagnards provided excellent officer material, and they fought loyally on the French side to the end.

Irregular forces included the private armies of the various politico-religious sects. In the south, the Hoa-Hao and Cao-Dai sects, whose religious practices are modified forms of Buddhism, had a total strength of about 4 million believers and controlled large segments of the population in the Mekong Delta and Tay-Ninh Province. Some 15,000 to 20,000 Cao-Dai troops and about 8,000 to 10,000 Hoa-Hao troops fought on the government side.²³ Catholic armed units, called Unités Mobiles de Défense des Chrétiens (Christian Communities Mobile Defense Units), controlled large parts of the eastern Mekong Delta area; in the north, similar Catholic self-defense units existed in the bishoprics of Phat-Diem and Bui-Chu in the southern part of the Red River Delta.

Small French liaison teams were assigned to these Buddhist and Christian forces, referred to by the French as supplétifs, but they had their own cadres and officers, many of whom were given training by the French in a special paramilitary school at Thu-Duc near Saigon. These paramilitary units were loosely coordinated by the Inspectorate for Supplementary Forces under the French Union Forces general staff. Often deeply motivated, these sectarian troops

fought well in their home areas, and also aided in the fairly extensive control which the French were able to exercise throughout the conflict over the Mekong Delta area. But in the long run they presented the authorities in Saigon with the problem of "warlord armies," more loyal to local interests than to those of the central government.

One other such group, the Binh-Xuyen, was in fact little more than a highly organized underworld gang, without any religious trappings or ideological pretenses. It contributed very little in active military operations; but, after it gained control of the underworld in Saigon, the Binh-Xuyen's few thousand gangster troops did help to contain Viet Minh terrorism in that city.

French Try Different Strategies

Examination of French combat operations in Indochina will clearly demonstrate several different strategic phases.²⁴ Until September 1950, a "constant offensive" was employed, using pincer operations designed to destroy both the guerrilla forces in the field and the insurgent administrative apparatus. After the destruction and loss of French positions along the Chinese border in 1950, the French decided to withdraw to the lowland Red River Delta and to consolidate their positions there until they were ready for further offensive operations. This phase of "retrenchment and consolidation" led to the construction of a bunker line in the Red River Delta.

The fall of 1951 saw the beginning of a period of offensive stabs, such as the one around Hoa-Binh, Operation LORRAINE, and constant mopping-up operations in the Mekong and Red River Deltas. Momentum was lost when the growing aggressiveness of Viet Minh forces in the spring of 1953 led to the adoption of "hedgehog" tactics. In order to break the momentum of guerrilla attacks until sufficient Indochinese national forces became available for static defensive missions and freed the FEC for constant offensives, air-supplied hedgehog positions were created in 1953-54 at Na San, the Plain of Jars, Muong-Sai, Séno, and Dien Bien Phu. These were designed to deflect Viet Minh attacks against vital centers.

Navarre's Strategy of Using Behind-the-Lines Bases Untried

When Gen. Henri-Eugène Navarre took over as commander in chief of the FUF in July 1953, his instructions were to defend Laos if possible but to safeguard the French Expeditionary Corps at all costs. His plan for action called for continuation and intensification of de Lattre's tactics; the buildup of local national forces; and the infusion of new spirit, mobility, and aggressiveness in French forces. The Navarre Plan, which was to have been fully implemented by 1955 but was never put into effect in view of the French defeat, provided for freeing the FEC entirely from static defense missions. Stationed at 21 land-air bases set up within Viet Minh territory, troops were to carry out offensive operations that would compel the enemy to use his troops for the defense of his own rear areas.

Although the Navarre Plan was never carried out, the constant French effort to bring mobility into combat operations is well illustrated by the number of airborne operations involving more than one parachute battalion. In eight years, these were almost evenly distributed among commando-type raids, reinforcement of cut-off garrisons, and support of major offensive stabs. In addition, there were four major offensive operations based entirely on the use of parachute forces: Hoa-Binh (1951), Na San (1952), Lang-Son (1953), and Dien Bien Phu (1953-54).

French Also Use Guerrilla Warfare

One of the most interesting aspects of French counterinsurgency operations was the increasingly intensive use of long-range penetration and unconventional warfare operations behind enemy lines, or rather, inside enemy territory. Created by General de Lattre in 1951, the Groupements de Commandos Mixtes Aéroportés (GCMA), or Composite Airborne Commando Groups, under the command of Lt. Col. Roger Trinquier, began to fight the Viet Minh with its own tactics. The purpose of the GCMA was emphatically not to hit and run in raider fashion but to establish local contacts with the population and arouse them to resistance against the Viet Minh. When a willingness to do so had been demonstrated, the French would then parachute in additional cadres of local origin to transform a French-created activity into a purely indigenous movement.²⁵ Such work required a great deal of patience and risk-taking on the part of the initial contact teams of perhaps four or five men, which necessarily included one or two natives from the contact area.

Trinquier asserts to this day that, had his operation been given wider latitude and more logistical support, the GCMA could have transformed the whole character of the struggle.²⁶ By July 1954, there even existed in the mountain areas of Tonkin the beginnings of a Mountain People's Committee calling for self-government of the northern mountain areas liberated by the GCMA. Over 20,000 French-sponsored guerrillas were actually operating inside Viet Minh territory by mid-1954, and plans called for 50,000 by 1955. There is no doubt that such a force would have created serious difficulties for the Viet Minh forces. As it was, the GCMA could point to the fact that their operations in the highlands kept 14 Viet Minh battalions on the lookout during the battle of Dien Bien Phu, while the 15,000 FEC troops at Dien Bien Phu tied down only 29 Viet Minh battalions. The GCMA also liberated singlehandedly all of Phong Saly Province in Laos—a feat regular forces had been unable to accomplish.

On the other hand, the GCMA failed in what should have been its primary mission: the destruction of Viet Minh supply routes to Dien Bien Phu. GCMA proponents claim, however, that the cautious approach the commandos had to use in order to be accepted by the local population made it impossible to create an effective force in the Dien Bien Phu area in time to intervene successfully. Trinquier asserts that, after the cease-fire, he attempted to get American military authorities in Saigon to continued support of the anti-Communist guerrillas inside

what was to become Communist North Viet-Nam but met with no encouragement. The anti-Communist guerrillas were destroyed by the Viet Minh after 1954.²⁷

The Role of Air and Naval Units

Airpower, which was also used for reconnaissance and tactical bombing and strafing missions, provided the French with essential logistical support, often in places where airborne reinforcements were the only kind which could get through. The French Air Force (FAF) at first used Spitfires and P-63's in ground support operations and C-47's for bombing and transport missions. In the 1950-54 period, when American B-26's and F4F's became the tactical mainstay, there was a total of 475 aircraft operating in Indochina. Helicopters were never in general use. The primary mission of the FAF was to provide close tactical support to FUF ground forces and to transport army personnel and supplies. Airborne operations were conducted extensively during the last years of the war. Some FAF officers complained of having to function in a supporting role under the command of FUF ground units, instead of being allowed to concentrate on air strikes against Viet Minh supply lines. It is not likely, however, that air attacks would have met with any great success, as the Vietnamese insurgents were particularly adept at camouflage and decentralization of logistical targets. Also, in the later state of the war, the insurgents had antiaircraft capabilities.

If airpower proved generally disappointing except in the very important area of logistics, the French Navy's amphibious operations in Indochina made a significant contribution to the art of warfare. Since Vietnamese rivers are navigable for LCM- and LCT-type vessels* fairly far inland, the French Navy developed tactical units known as dinassauts (naval assault divisions) equipped with some 12 to 18 craft ranging from LCVP's to LSSL's. Each dinassaut was made up of an opening group (groupement d'ouverture) of small reconnaissance craft; a shock group of ships carrying marine commandos and sometimes armored vehicles; a base-of-fire group, composed of shipborne heavy mortars or tank-turreted LCM's; and a command and support group, which usually included the command LSSL, supply LCM's, and often the small amphibian aircraft which were part of the dinassaut.

In addition to these purely naval units, which possessed considerable fire and shock power and participated in several major operations, there were other specialized amphibious units built around Crab- and Alligator-type U.S. naval craft. Each such group was composed of 33 vehicles, including artillery and mortars. Finally, the French Quartermaster Service operated several supply companies equipped with 32 LCM's each. Since each LCM had the carrying capacity of fifty 2.5-ton trucks, any operation within reach of a navigable river was normally

*Locally modified U.S. landing craft: LCM (Landing Craft, Materiel), LCT (Landing Craft, Tank), LCVP (Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel), LSSL (Landing Ship Support, Large), LST (Landing Ship, Tank).

assured of rapid and fairly safe logistical support, although there were many ambushes of such convoys by the Viet Minh. French units faced river mines and attacks by well-camouflaged snipers with recoilless rifles along the riverbanks; there were even cases of dams being built at night across a river to cut off the withdrawal of French river craft.²⁸

French Search for a Political Solution

In the all-important area of political reform, the colonial power was handicapped by the total lack of consensus in France and Indochina alike as to the future of the territory and by the absence of effective indigenous leadership once a policy of decolonialization was finally embarked upon. In 1945-46, the French had promised independence as an ultimate goal. Early in 1948, they began negotiations with ex-Emperor Bao Dai in Hong Kong, where the Vietnamese ruler had been living in retirement after becoming disillusioned with the Viet Minh regime. By March 1949, France had agreed to Bao Dai's demands for the reunion of Cochin China with an independent Viet-Nam, in which the French were to be given certain preferential treatment. In that month, Viet-Nam officially joined the French Union as an Associated State, receiving a large degree of autonomy, as well as the right to send its own diplomatic representatives to certain specified countries. France retained the right to control Viet-Nam's foreign policy and military affairs. Later in the year, Laos and Cambodia also accepted an associated status.²⁹

The political reality of the new independence failed to make itself felt, however, in the midst of civil war and under the circumstances of the political settlement. When Bao Dai returned to lead the reunified and theoretically independent non-Communist state of Viet-Nam, there was little to excite the imagination of the Vietnamese people, and endless haggling over details among French and Indochinese officials frittered away the psychological impact of the event. The "Bao Dai solution," with its series of ineffective premiers under the inept leadership of an unpopular monarch and the continued dominance of the French High Commissioner in Saigon, failed almost from the start. The Bao Dai regime set up in 1949 was never able to offer any real challenge to the Ho Chi Minh regime.³⁰

Indeed, by 1949 the political struggle with the Viet Minh had already been lost, at least in Viet-Nam, if not in Laos and Cambodia. After three years of French vacillation and dilatory behavior, no responsible Vietnamese leader was willing to risk his reputation in behalf of a French-supported Vietnamese regime. Ngo Dinh Diem, who was later to lead South Viet-Nam (1954-63), was a typical example: he chose exile in the United States until the French relinquished effective control in Viet-Nam.

In the face of basic military and political failures, the various techniques of population management tried by the French had little practical effect. The country was far too vast and the rebel-held areas too interwoven with loyal areas even to apply effective food-denial measures. Too much of the population was directly under Viet Minh control to implement a

thoroughgoing program of resettlement, although a limited program in Cambodia met with much success.³¹ Police action against Viet Minh terrorists in the Saigon area was successful after 1951, however, when a brutally efficient security system was established.

French Military Reverses

During the last six months of the Indochina conflict, French Union Forces suffered serious reverses, beginning with the Viet Minh offensive into Laos in December 1953. In a rapid dash across northern Laos, the VPA's 308th Division reached Muong-Sai, north of Luang-Prabang while another stab across central Laos by strong elements of the 304th and 325th VPA Divisions reached the Mekong at Thakhek by late December, cutting Laos in half and rolling back French positions all along the Mekong valley to the Thai border. French groupe mobile No. 2 was hacked to pieces on Road No. 12, while the 2d Battalion, 4th Moroccan Rifles, was pushed westward from Road 12. The important French airbase at Séno near Savannakhet was hastily transformed into another hedgehog outpost with the help of remnants from GM 2, Airborne Group No. 1, and GM 51, which was brought up from Cambodia (thus leaving that country to be defended almost entirely by indigenous forces).

The movement of the 308th VPA Division into Muong-Sai compelled the French to create another hedgehog in that area. Time for this construction was bought by sacrificing the 2d Battalion of Laotian Chasseurs and the 2d Battalion, 3d Foreign Legion Infantry, which were totally destroyed in a rearguard fight with VPA Regiments 102 and 148. Moreover, the support of these new hedgehogs, in additions to Dien Bien Phu and the Plain of Jars, became an insuperable problem in air logistics. There was insufficient airfield space, not to mention pilots and maintenance crews, to meet all these conflicting requirements at the same time over a territory almost four times the size of both North and South Korea.

In the meantime, the Viet Minh had also gone on the offensive in the southern plateau. There, VPA Regiments 108 and 803 swarmed across Roads 14 and 19, encircled An Khê, took Kontum, and proceeded to destroy GMs 100 and 42 in a grueling campaign that was to last until the July cease-fire. This drive eventually brought VPA regulars to the southern edge of the southern plateau.

FUF activities during this critical period were aimed at preventing a rapid buildup of Viet Minh forces around the vital Red River Delta in the north and at diverting VPA troops in central Viet-Nam from attacks against the Mekong valley and the northern positions.³² Operation ATLANTE, a French seaborne landing made at Tuy-Hoa in south central Viet-Nam, was therefore undertaken in the insurgents' Interzone V.³³ Its goal—to divert VPA troops—was, however, unsuccessful both in concept and execution. Tuy-Hoa was too far away to tempt Viet Minh forces in the north, and in fact the Viet Minh were not drawn away from their centers of strength. Thus the French frittered away valuable resources. In a second effort to attract northern Viet

Minh forces away from the Red River Delta and to block their entry into northern Laos, French forces were airdropped into Dien Bien Phu, located only 230 miles northwest of the Red River Delta, on November 30, 1953; this was the start of Operation CASTOR.

Battle of Dien Bien Phu

Garrisoned in a valley somewhat less than 10 miles long and 6 miles wide, with outlying defense positions on some but not all of the surrounding hills, eight battalions of FUF troops waited at Dien Bien Phu for almost four months before the Viet Minh attacked in force. The two-month siege began in March 1954, when the VPA took up positions in the hills overlooking the French outposts and opened a barrage of artillery fire which could not be countered. The 15,000 defenders soon found that they had drastically underestimated the VPA's artillery and attack capabilities. Meanwhile, the onset of the monsoon season curtailed French air operations vital to the lift of the 200 tons of supply a day required for the troops at Dien Bien Phu. Under incessant shelling and wave after wave of attacking VPA infantry, French defense perimeters were steadily reduced until finally even the air strips inside Dien Bien Phu were lost. Left without adequate air support and cut off from relief by ground forces unable to break through the iron ring of the VPA siege force, the garrison surrendered on May 8, 1954.³⁴

The consequences of Dien Bien Phu's fall were far-reaching. Although five Viet Minh divisions had remained concentrated in that area for almost four months, partially achieving the initial goal of deflecting VPA pressure elsewhere, the fall of the garrison was devastating in terms of loss of French combat morale and world opinion. The respite thus bought for the Red River Delta by the sacrifice of Dien Bien Phu was too short to do any good. Three VPA divisions appeared on the edge of the delta within a month after Dien Bien Phu, and by July the French perimeter around the Hanoi-Haiphong road and rail axis had shrunk to a narrow corridor. Except in southern Viet-Nam the situation changed for the worse.

French Face External and Internal Pressures

To cope with the vastly deteriorated military situation, the French needed reinforcements of supplies and personnel in large numbers. French laws, however, still forbade the use of French draftees outside of Europe. In the United States there was little opposition to supplying economic and material aid to the French, but the possibility of involving American troops in combat operations in Indochina created an immediate outcry in the U.S. Congress. France's failure to give real substance to the independence granted the Indochinese states in 1949 gave the conflict the character of a colonial war in American eyes, and besides, the memory of Korea was all too fresh. Anxious to avoid involvement in another Asian war, the United States refused even to send American planes to rescue the beleaguered French at Dien Bien Phu.³⁵

In France, the war in Indochina became increasingly unpopular because of its financial cost, its drain on the French Regular Army, and its exploitation by the left-wing parties as a domestic political issue. Faced with mounting domestic opposition to a continuance of the war, and without any hope of active Anglo-American participation in their counterinsurgent efforts, the French government of Prime Minister Pierre Mendès-France resolved to end the conflict by negotiations at an international conference of world powers.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

Hostilities were officially ended on July 20, 1954, when a cease-fire agreement was signed at Geneva, Switzerland, by the military representatives of the FUF high command on behalf of the FEC and the Vietnamese and Laotian Armies and by representatives of the Vietnamese People's Army high command. The Cambodian Army high command, operating alone since October 1953, signed on its own. Because of the difficulty of informing all Viet Minh units in the field of the cease-fire, it became effective in the zones on varying dates between July 27 and August 7.

The diplomatic conference held at Geneva was attended by representatives of France and the DRVN, as well as of the non-Communist governments of Viet-Nam, Laos, and Cambodia. Communist China, the U.S.S.R., Great Britain, and the United States were also represented. It was agreed at this conference that all Viet Minh forces would be regrouped north of the 17th parallel (the present territory of North Viet-Nam) and all Laotian Communist forces in Laos would be concentrated in two Laotian provinces along the North Vietnamese border, while French Union Forces were to be withdrawn to southern Indochina. Pending eventual elections to reunify Viet-Nam, that country was to be administered by Communist forces in the north and by non-Communist forces in the south. Neither the Government of Viet-Nam (GVN) in the south—later to become the Republic of Viet-Nam—nor the United States signed the Geneva agreements, but in a separate declaration the United States promised to "refrain from the threat or use of force to disturb" these agreements and the U.S. government stated that "it would view any renewal of the aggression. . . with grave concern."³⁶

Terms and Effects of the 1954 Geneva Accord

The Geneva agreements of 1954, by providing the Viet Minh with a homogeneous and openly held territory and a Communist buffer zone in Laos, gave the DRVN an international standing which it had not previously enjoyed. Also, the transfer to Communist hands of North Vietnamese industrial centers and the prestige-laden city of Hanoi, with its modern installations and Indochina's only full-fledged university, gave the DRVN the basic infrastructure for national viability. The fact that 860,000 North Vietnamese fled to the south during the 300-day grace

period for withdrawals provided in the agreements also temporarily lightened the DRVN's supply burden. North Viet-Nam, it should be remembered, is a food deficit area. On the other hand, the Viet Minh received less territory under the Geneva settlement—which divided Viet-Nam at the 17th parallel—than their military forces actually held at the time of the diplomatic conference. This has been explained by the conciliatory role played at Geneva by the U.S.S.R., which in 1954 was trying to induce France not to join the European Defense Community.

The effect of the cease-fire on South Viet-Nam was in some ways beneficial. It brought a temporary halt to open Communist activity, cleared the way for the total withdrawal of the colonial presence of France, made possible large-scale aid by the United States, and provided the breathing space necessary for the creation of a more stable system of civilian government in the form of the Republic of Viet-Nam, proclaimed on October 26, 1955. Until late in 1959, Communist insurgency was limited to the fringe areas of Laos and to small-scale activities in South Viet-Nam, where its apparently nonmilitary nature (e.g., the assassination of village officials) was mistakenly interpreted as the "dying gasps" of the earlier Indochina war rather than the resumption of new hostilities.³⁷

In Laos, the amputation of two northeastern provinces as regroupment areas for Communist Pathet Lao forces was designed to be a temporary measure and did not prevent the establishment of representative government of a neutral nature. A French military mission and a military base at Séno gave added security. A reunification agreement with the Pathet Lao, signed in November 1957, temporarily unified the country under control of the Vientiane government, but continued subversive warfare soon upset the precarious balance.*

Cambodia, by all accounts, fared best under the terms of the cease-fire. Having defeated the local Communists and their Viet Minh supporters in January 1954, the Cambodians did not have to provide regroupment areas under the cease-fire terms. Elections supervised by the Indian-Canadian-Polish International Control Commission (ICC), set up in Indochina under the Geneva agreements, showed overwhelming support for the Khmer government of King Norodom Sihanouk. All vestigial French controls were to be removed under the cease-fire, but American and French military advisory groups were to remain. Cambodia, like Laos, chose a neutral foreign policy which was made the law of the land in 1957.

Cost of War to France

For France, the Geneva accord provided an exit—albeit a humiliating one—from a military and political cul-de-sac that was exhausting both resources and manpower. Despite increasing American aid, which by 1954 was expected to reach 70 percent of the current war costs, the Indochina war was damaging the French economy; its total cost was estimated at over \$11 billion

*See ch. 12, "Laos (1959-1962)."

The conflict also distorted the structure of the French military establishment, whose best trained troops were involved 8,000 miles from home.³⁸

Total casualties in the French Expeditionary Corps during the eight years of fighting amounted to approximately 140,000 men, and there were over 31,000 casualties in the Indo-chinese national armies. Although there was no deliberate policy to kill wounded prisoners of war, no special facilities were provided for their care by the Communists before 1954. No prisoners with abdominal, chest, or skull wounds are known to have survived.³⁹

From a military viewpoint, the French Army gained from its Indochinese experience a valuable store of first-hand knowledge about counterinsurgency warfare operations which was later to prove useful in Algeria. In fact, almost none of the military errors made in the Indochina campaign were repeated in North Africa, where the French were never defeated militarily; it was the political situation that made Algeria untenable for the French. On the other hand, the Geneva settlement left a feeling of bitterness and frustration among many French military personnel which later led to a series of mutinies and subversive political activities by some officers when the French government attempted to reach a political settlement in Algeria.*

Some Military Lessons From the Indochina Conflict

What may one learn from the Indochina conflict? French forces in Indochina were highly organized and well-equipped for conventional combat operations, at least after 1946. The very sophistication and complexity of the French military establishment, however, deprived it of one essential characteristic of successful counterinsurgency—speed in reacting to new situations. What is meant here is not speed of movement across terrain, so much as "administrative speed," or the time required to relay valuable information and to get back the proper orders in response. In that sense, the French never gained the initiative. On the other hand, although it has been widely accepted that French counterinsurgency operations in Indochina were entirely of the Maginot Line variety, the facts fail to bear out that view. Until 1949, the very size of the FEC precluded its resort to any such attempt at holding a battleline; instead, the FEC practiced another well-known French concept of war which proved to be almost as costly as Maginot Line tactics might have been—the constant offense tactic.

Another major lesson of the Indochinese conflict is that the indigenous peoples of Southeast Asia fight well when properly motivated and led. Among the animistic mountain tribes of Vietnam, military prowess has as high a value as among American Plains Indians. The lowland Indochinese have made good highland jungle fighters, disproving the myth that lowlanders fight well only in a rice-paddy environment.

What accounted, above all, for the eventual French defeat was simply the fact that the French were fighting at almost a 1-to-1 ratio in a type of war in which a 10-to-1 superiority on

*See Vol. III, ch. 10, "Algeria (1954-1962)."

the part of the counterinsurgent force is generally considered minimal for success.⁴⁰ The real surprise of the French military effort in Indochina is not that the French were defeated, but that it took eight years for this to happen.

Some Political Errors

The chief political mistake of the French colonial regime in Indochina was its failure to encourage moderate elements to form local mass-based political parties. Thus, non-Communist nationalists were forced to choose either abject submission as French puppets or active participation in the Communist-dominated Viet Minh.

For various reasons, including the personalities involved, the non-Communist political elites of Viet-Nam and Laos proved totally incapable of motivating their people to active resistance of Communist subversion of the anti-French movement. Only in Cambodia, led by the energetic King (later Prince) Sihanouk, was Communist infiltration of the nationalist movement successfully repulsed. The colonial policies pursued by the British and Americans, in which moderate nationalists were allowed to come to power in India, Malaya, and the Philippines, had led to more satisfactory results in the decolonization period after World War II. One may only speculate as to what extent the work of the moderates may have been facilitated by particularly inept leadership of the Communist organizations in these last countries.

One remarkable thing about the Communist organization in Indochina was that the Party dominated the nationalist movement; it was the only Communist party in Southeast Asia to do so. Even in Indonesia, where Dutch colonial policies certainly did not favor the moderates, the Communists had been unable to control the nationalist movement. Communist success in Indochina was as much due to the sophistication of Vietnamese Communist leadership as to the nature of French colonial policies, although these two factors complemented each other. What sets off the ICP from other Communist organizations almost the world over is that, long before Tito and others in eastern Europe discovered "national communism," the Indochinese Communists had achieved a complete symbiosis of their doctrinal and national objectives. In fact, it can be shown that their nationalist anti-French resistance was not at first greeted with enthusiasm on the part of either the French or Soviet Communist Parties.⁴¹ But it completely fooled those non-Communist observers who saw only the ICP's primarily "nationalist" behavior and not its ultimate "Communist" objectives.

When hostilities began in Viet-Nam in late 1946, the French had only two real choices. They could turn Viet-Nam over without a fight to the DRVN regime, in which the Communists were already the dominant political group and the controlling force, or they could fight. Twice during the Indochina war a negotiated peace might have been obtained. The first time was in March 1947, when Prof. Paul Mus, the French negotiator, had almost come to full agreement with Ho Chi Minh; but the French high command insisted upon the return to French authority of

all "war criminals and deserters," such as foreign instructors, mainly Japanese and German, who were serving with the Viet Minh. The second chance came after Giap's "erroneous offensives" of the 1951-52 period had brought the Viet Minh to grief. A French delegation was about to meet with DRVN representatives in Rangoon when it received orders to return to France, allegedly as a result of American pressure,⁴² since an end of the war in Indochina at that time would have thrown the entire weight of Communist aggression in Asia upon the Korean front. On the whole, however, the French maintained an unrealistic policy of unconditional surrender almost until the end of the insurgency. It was only when military victory appeared completely impossible that the French accepted an alternative solution giving the Communists something less than full control of Viet-Nam, key to the entire Indochinese territory.

Admitting that the Indochina struggle was first and foremost a colonial war and that France's motives for fighting it were not strictly altruistic, it should nevertheless be noted that the outcome of the conflict bought at least five years of freedom from Communist takeover for some 23 million out of about 38 million people. Considering the alternative possibility, the results of the French counterinsurgency in Indochina do not appear to have been wholly negative.

NOTES

¹For background information on the historical origins of the population of Indochina, see Special Operations Research Office, U. S. Army Area Handbook for Vietnam (Washington: GPO, 1962); Georges Coedès, Les Etats Hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie (Paris: Boccard, 1948).

²Bernard B. Fall, The Two Viet-Nams (rev. ed.; New York: Praeger, 1964), pp. 29-31.

³Over 60,000 Vietnamese civilian workers were transported to France during World War I to replace drafted French workers in war factories, and about 40,000 came to France in 1939. A number of them settled down there, although some went home to Viet-Nam. Vietnamese settlements numbering several thousand individuals also exist in French Guiana and New Caledonia.

⁴For a good appraisal of ICP operations in the 1930's, see I. Milton Sacks, "Marxism in Viet Nam," Marxism in Southeast Asia, ed. Frank Trager (Stanford University Press, 1960).

⁵Cf. Truong Chinh, Primer for Revolt (New York: Praeger, 1963).

⁶Ellen J. Hammer, The Struggle for Indochina (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1954), pp. 30-33.

⁷Fall, Two Viet-Nams, pp. 40-59.

⁸Ibid., p. 60; Hammer, Struggle, pp. 45-53.

⁹Fall, Two Viet-Nams, pp. 61-63.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 71-78.

¹¹Quoted in Hammer, Struggle, p. 105.

¹²Fall, Two Viet-Nams, pp. 82-101.

¹³Ibid., pp. 116, 129.

¹⁴Vo Nguyen Giap, People's War, People's Army (New York: Praeger, 1962), pp. xxix-xxxix.

¹⁵Bernard B. Fall, Street Without Joy (4th ed.; Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole Co., 1964), pp. 28-30.

¹⁶Mao Tse-tung, Strategic Aspects of China's Revolutionary War (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1954), p. 40.

¹⁷Gen. Boyer de la Tour, Le Martyre de l'armée française (Paris: Les Presses du Mail, 1963), p. 47.

¹⁸George K. Tanham, Communist Revolutionary Warfare: The Viet-Minh in Indochina (New York: Praeger, 1961), pp. 68-69.

¹⁹Fall, Two Viet-Nams, pp. 106-107.

²⁰Bernard B. Fall, "L'Aide américaine au Viet-Nam et à la Corée," Politique étrangère (Paris), (May 1955). The author distinguishes between aid actually delivered before July 20, 1954, and those aid credits which were voted in the U.S. Congress. For resettlement, see Fall, Two Viet-Nams, p. 372.

²¹Fall, in Street Without Joy, has pointed out that at least one major FUF offensive in North Viet-Nam, designed to crush the whole headquarters of the rebellion, fell short of its objective,

due to the last-minute diversion of French troops to crush an uprising in Madagascar. Today it is an interesting speculation as to whether the Malagasy affair did not in fact save the Viet Minh.

²²Fall, Two Viet-Nams, p. 115.

²³Hammer, Struggle, p. 285.

²⁴Cf. Gen. Jean Marchand, L'Indochine en guerre (Paris: Pouzet, 1954).

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Roger Trinquier, Modern Warfare: A French View of Counter-Insurgency Warfare (New York: Praeger, 1964).

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Good sources on the subject can be found in Jacques Mordal, Marine Indochine (Paris: Amiot-Dumont, 1953); Jean Maucière, Marins dans les arroyos (Paris: Peyronnet, 1949); Cdr. Brossard, Dinassaut (Paris: France-Empire, 1952).

²⁹Hammer, Struggle, p. 234.

³⁰Fall, Two Viet-Nams, p. 212-216.

³¹Jean Laproux, "30,000 cambodgiens échappent à l'emprise des rebelles," Indochine-Sud-Asiatique (Saigon), (January 1953), 23-28.

³²Navarre, quoted in Fall, Two Viet-Nams, p. 127.

³³Fall, Street, pp. 186ff.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 312-329; The Washington Post (November 5, 1964), p. A 26.

³⁵See Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway and H. H. Martin, Soldier: Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgway (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), Dwight D. Eisenhower, Mandate for Change, 1953-1956 (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1963).

³⁶United Kingdom, Further Documents Relating to the Discussion of Indo-China at the Geneva Conference, June 16-July 21, 1954 (Cmd. Paper 9239), (London: HMSO, 1954), p. 7.

³⁷Fall, Two Viet-Nams, pp. 337-384.

³⁸For a French appraisal, see Gen. Paul Ely, L'Indochine dans la tourmente (Paris: Plon, 1964).

³⁹Fall, Street, p. 296.

⁴⁰W. W. Rostow, "Guerrilla Warfare in Underdeveloped Areas," Marine Corps Gazette (January 1962), p. 49: "... As you know, it takes somewhere between 10 and 20 soldiers to control 1 guerrilla in an organized operation. . . ."

⁴¹Bernard B. Fall, "Trials and Tribulations of a Party Line: The French Communist Party and the Indochina War," Foreign Affairs (April 1955).

⁴²See Bidault-Daladier exchange of March 9, 1954, in Journal officiel débats parlementaires (March 10, 1954), p. 768.

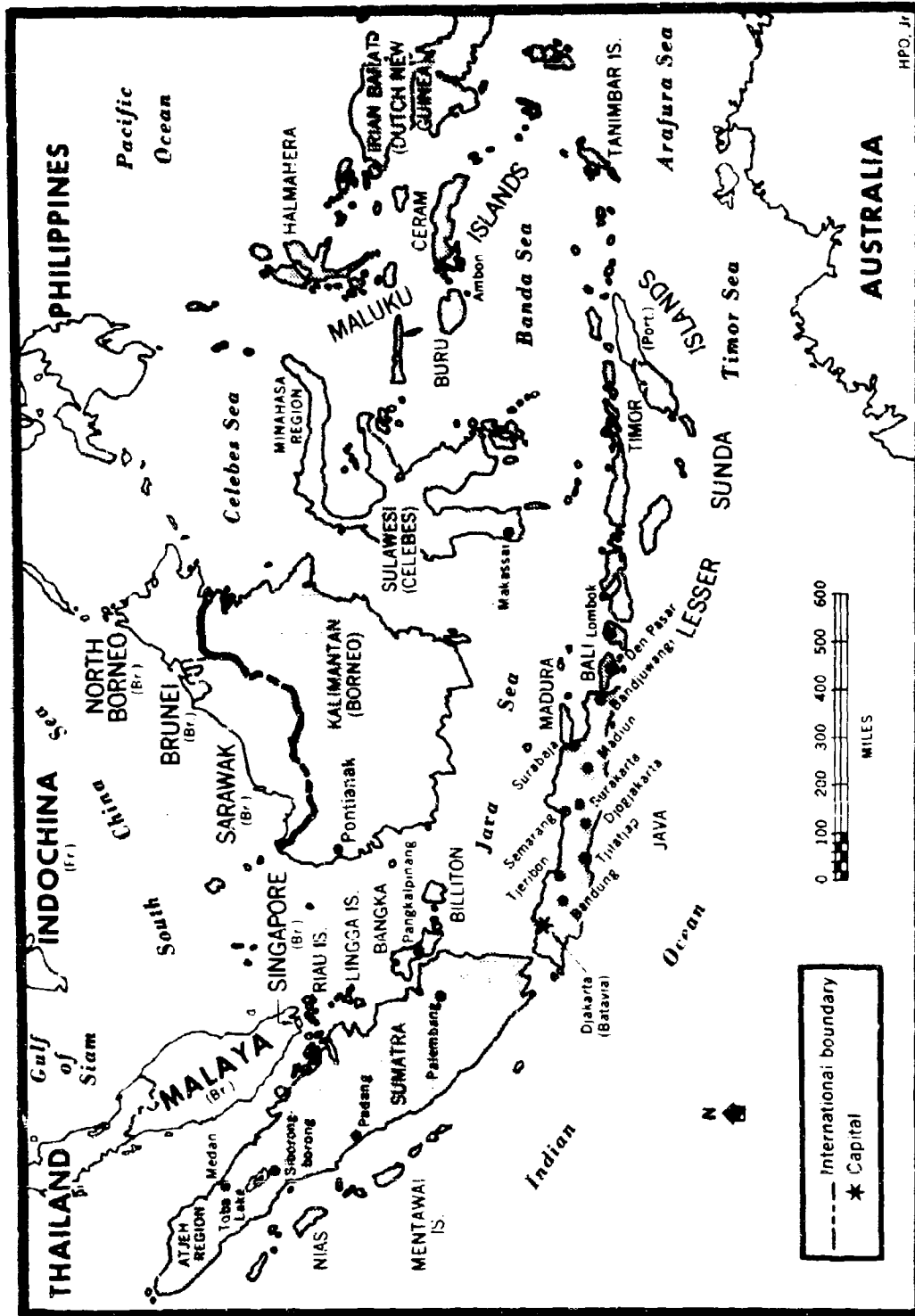
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Chapter Ten

**INDONESIA
1946-1949**

by Genevieve Collins Linebarger



NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES (INDONESIA) (1946-1949)

HPO, Jr

Chapter Ten

INDONESIA (1946-1949)

by Genevieve Collins Linebarger

Underestimating the intensity and dynamism of Indonesian nationalism at the end of World War II, the Dutch turned to political action and military operations to restore their rule of the Netherlands East Indies—only to be driven out by popular resistance, guerrilla harassment, and international disapproval.

BACKGROUND

Although to the outside world the Indonesian revolt against the Dutch appeared to spring full blown and fully armed, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter, such was not the case. The concept of Indonesian nationalism had existed long before the word gained its modern vogue. There had been great kingdoms and empires embodying much of present-day Indonesia: Srivijaya, which in the 9th century encompassed southeastern Sumatra, the island of Bangka, and much of the Malay Peninsula; Majapahit, which in the 14th century dominated most of the islands of Indonesia; and Mataram, which somewhat later was the largest of the Javanese states.¹

The fact is, however, that the Indonesia we know today is a creature of Dutch fashioning, the islands of the area being united only at the hands of the Dutch. Following the Portuguese and Spanish, the Dutch first arrived in the Indies in 1596; but it was not until the formation of the United East India Company in 1602 that the Dutch really came to the Indies to stay. By the 1930's, despite some liberalization of the government, the Netherlands East Indies (NEI) was a colony governed chiefly from Holland, its product geared to that country's needs, and with the Netherlands having a monopoly of trade.

Geography and Climate

In view of the physical aspects of Indonesia, it is not so surprising that the country had never been completely united before the Dutch colonized or conquered it, island by island. Indonesia comprises some 3,000 islands stretched across an expanse of more than 3,000 miles. The total territory is 735,340 square miles, the largest islands being Sumatra, Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo), Java, Sulawesi (Celebes), and Irian Barat (West New Guinea).²

The islands are volcanic (some 70 volcanoes are still active, scattered throughout the island group) and heavily forested; except on Java, navigable rivers make up the major lines of communication. Sumatra has few good harbors; Java has only one harbor in the south (Tjilatjap), but several in the north, of which the best known are those of Surabaya, Tjeribon (near Linggadjadi), and Tandjung Priok (Djakarta's harbor). The other islands, however, are more readily accessible by sea.

The two islands on which most of the fighting of the Indonesian revolution took place, Sumatra and Java, present a number of contrasts. Sumatra is some 1,600 miles long, and much of it is covered with tropical swamp and rain forests. Java, on the contrary, is only 600 miles long, and between 60 and 100 miles wide. The chief fertile agricultural areas are in Java, while a great part of Indonesia's oil is found in Sumatra.³

In climate the entire area is tropical, but the rainy seasons differ somewhat because of the difference of prevailing winds. Sumatra has an especially heavy rainfall, averaging 150 inches a year, and is inclement at all seasons, particularly in October and November north of the equator and in December and January south of the equator. Winds are strongest on the west coast in August and on the east coast in July. Java's wet season is from October to May, but winds in east Java tend to create drought conditions. Rainfall differs considerably for the different parts of Java, ranging from less than 40 inches annually for the Tjeribon plain to 160 inches for Bantam.⁴

Indonesia's Many Peoples

Indonesia's population differs almost as much as the islands of the archipelago. Because no census was taken between 1930 and 1961, estimates differ as to the population at the end of World War II and the beginning of the revolution, varying usually between 86 and 88 million. Java in 1946, with a population of 53 million, was (and is) one of the most densely populated areas in the world, averaging 800 persons per square mile for the island as a whole. Around Surakarta and extending inland to Djogjakarta, the estimated population was 3,000 persons per square mile, while the northern alluvial plain area around Djakarta contained an estimated 6,200 persons per square mile. Sumatra, with about 9 million inhabitants in 1946, had an average population density of 44 persons per square mile.⁵

Java's population tends to be more homogeneous than that of Sumatra and the other islands. (Java and Madura, its near neighbor, are almost always treated together.) The three largest ethnic groups in Java are the Javanese (estimated at about three-fourths of the population of the island of Java and nearly half of the whole population of Indonesia), the Sundanese (estimated at less than a third of the the number of Javanese), and the Madurese (estimated at about one-sixth the number of Javanese). The Badui and Tenggerese make up only a very small percentage of Java's population. Sumatra, on the other hand, is ethnically quite diverse,

comprising at least 11 different groups (more, if the different kinds of Bataks, Kubus, and others included in the Redjang-Lampong group are counted separately). The largest groups, however, are the coastal Malays, the Minangkabau, the Batak groups, the Niassans, and the Atjenese. In other parts of Indonesia—not particularly pertinent to this study because most of the actual insurgency and counterinsurgency action took place on Java and Sumatra—there is also great diversity of ethnic groupings.

The Role of Religion in the Insurgency

About 90 percent of Indonesia's population is Muslim, including most of the population of Java and Sumatra. Two exceptions are the Badui tribe in Java, who are ancestor worshippers, and the Sumatran Bataks, many of whom are Christian. There are some 2.8 million Christians, who come mostly from Ambon. Of the estimated 1.5 million Hindus, most are Balinese. The remainder of the indigenous population continues animism, ancestor worship, and magic practices, while the minority Chinese population, an estimated 2.5 million before 1949, practices a mixture of Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism.⁶ Some of these groups—the animist Baduis, the Christian Ambonese, to a lesser degree the Christian Bataks, and the minority Chinese—tended to side with the Dutch out of fear of persecution by the Muslim Indonesians, but in the development of the insurgency ethnic and religious factors played little part.

Dutch Colonial Policies

In order to understand the political situation, it is necessary to go back in time before the beginning of World War II to examine what the Dutch had done in the Indies. At the beginning of World War II, government in the Netherlands East Indies consisted of the Dutch Governor General, the Council of the Indies, the People's Council (Volksraad), and a College of Delegates. The Council of the Indies was an executive body which, from 1930 on, consisted of the Governor General, a Vice President, and six members, two of whom were Indonesians. The Volksraad was a legislative body which until 1929 had had a Dutch majority; in that year the proportions were changed giving the Indonesians a membership of 30, the Dutch, 25; and foreign Asians (Arabs and Chinese), 5. The College of Delegates was formed from the Volksraad on the basis of proportional representation and consisted, after 1935, of 15 members. There were also, by 1930, 32 municipal councils and 15 provincial councils scattered throughout the area.

Not only did the Dutch hold the most and the highest political positions in the old Netherlands East Indies, but the entire economy was geared to Dutch economic needs, notably in the production of export crops. The Volksraad, particularly its Indonesian members, complained even before World War II that the Dutch underpaid labor; that they gave the country an insufficient return for the products taken out, especially from the sugar, oil, and shipping industries, as well as from the estates of Sumatra's east coast; and that they took too much of the water

supply. Very few Indonesians occupied top positions in business ventures and they lacked sufficient capital to embark on their own. Moreover the Dutch discouraged industrialization as being contrary to Dutch interests; they desired to sell their own products to the Indonesians. The Indonesians were encouraged to grow, on Dutch estates, such products as indigo, sugar, coffee, and rubber—none of which was vital to Indonesian needs but all of which produced good profits for the colonial power.⁸

These circumstances, while not known in detail by the Indonesian population as a whole, nevertheless generated a feeling that Indonesia was not getting a fair share of profits from the rich products of Indonesian soil.

Growing Nationalism Is Ignored by the Dutch

More important to the growth of nationalist sentiment was the fact that there had been reformist—later nationalist—associations in the NEI since the early 20th century beginning with Budi Utomo, a cultural organization founded in 1908, and Sarekat Dagang Islam (Islamic Trading Association), founded in 1909 and transformed into the Sarekat Islam (Islamic Association) in 1912. Another association formed at about the same time was the Mohammadjah Movement. Both Sarekat Islam and Mohammadjah were originally religious and cultural organizations, but they gradually began to take on political overtones. Sarekat Islam, unfortunately, was infiltrated by Communists in the 1900's. Nonetheless, these organizations and others stimulated nationalism among the common people, whereas previously only the nobles had been concerned.⁹

When awakening nationalism led to the formation of a number of nationalistic associations or parties, the Dutch—misunderstanding the depth of feeling represented by these parties—thought that, if the leaders were only removed from the scene, nationalism would die a natural death. Almost every important Indonesian nationalist leader was imprisoned or detained in exile at one time or another for political activities; these included Sukarno,* Mohammad Hatta, Soetan Sjahrir, and others. Sukarno was exiled in 1933, Hatta and Sjahrir in 1934; none were released until the coming of the Japanese in 1942. Ironically, these political exiles later became the aristocracy of Indonesian political life.¹⁰

The Dutch had also rejected prewar Indonesian proposals for liberalizing the regime. These had included a 1936 proposal from the Volksraad, known as the Sutardjo Petition, asking for a Round Table Conference to discuss increased self-government for the NEI over a period of 10 years, with the eventual goal of complete self-government within a Netherlands union. This proposal was ignored and unanswered. Another petition, the Wiwoho Resolution of 1940, met a similar fate. When the Volksraad in some desperation set up the Visman Committee to

*Like many other Indonesians, Sukarno has only one name, although "Achmed" was supplied as a first name "by an enterprising American newspaperman who wanted his dispatches to look more complete." (Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, p. ix.)

investigate conditions in the NEI and request representational government for the area, its report was also ignored until May 1941, when, with the Netherlands already occupied by the Germans, Dutch Queen Wilhelmina stated that she wished to be informed of the desires of the overseas territories. On December 6, 1942, she made a speech which was a masterpiece of vagueness, promising only that after the war there would be consideration of changed relationships between the Netherlands proper and its colonies.¹³

Even with these incentives, however, it is unlikely that the Indonesians would have undertaken open defiance of the Dutch had it not been for their experience in administration and military training under the Japanese during World War II and the availability of weapons in the postwar period.

The Japanese Encourage Indonesian Nationalism

After the Japanese invaded the NEI on January 10, 1942, they established a provisional and quite colonial system of administration. Although the Japanese administration was in many ways cruel, it gradually gave administrative positions to many Indonesians, who thereby gained valuable experience. Some Indonesians, such as Sjahrir and Amir Sjarifuddin, joined the anti-Japanese underground movement. Others, such as Sukarno, Hatta, educational leader Dewantara, and Muslim leader Kiaji M. H. Mansur, formed a group known as the Empat Serengkal, or Four-Leaf Clover, intending to use the Japanese to further the cause of Indonesian nationalism. There is reason to believe that both Indonesian collaborators and underground leaders were secretly working in conjunction with each other in order to place Indonesia in the best possible position to escape postwar colonialism, whether Dutch or Japanese. Even before the fall of Japan, Indonesian committees had been set up to investigate the question of independence.

As the Japanese saw their own military downfall imminent, they became increasingly permissive toward the Indonesians. On August 7, 1945, the Japanese permitted the setting up of a Committee for the Preparation of Indonesian Independence (the Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia). This concession was probably partly due to Japanese fear of an Indonesian revolt against themselves, as the Indonesians realized the increasingly weakened position of their occupiers. With Japanese concurrence, Indonesian independence was proclaimed on August 17, 1945. Although Japan had surrendered to the Allied Powers on August 14, announcement of this surrender was withheld in Indonesia until August 21, so that Indonesian leaders had a period of time in which to put their government in order.¹⁴

By the time that the British (first of the Allied troops to arrive in Indonesia after the war) landed, on September 29, 1945, the Indonesian Republic was a functioning reality. Gen. Philip Christison, commander of British troops, acknowledged this fact almost immediately by accepting the de facto status of the Indonesian Republic. For this, he was later bitterly blamed

by the Dutch. In fact, he could hardly have done anything else. The Japanese had turned over to the Indonesians the Dutch internec camps and, in some cases, their weapons and ammunition as well. The Japanese had also given military training to a large number of Indonesians, who were quite willing, if not eager, to use that training against any group that might try to reimpose a colonial form of government in the area. Experts disagree as to Japanese motives, but there is some evidence that Japanese leaders had planned that, should their Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere fail, at least the European colonial powers would not again return in strength to the Far East.

The Government of the New Indonesian Republic

The government which the newly formed Republic of Indonesia adopted, under a provisional constitution, had a president, assisted by ministers of state responsible to him, a vice president, a Council of State, a Council of Representatives, a People's Congress, and a Supreme Court. The Council of State, or Supreme Advisory Council (Dewan Pertimbangan Agung), was to be composed as provided by law; its duties were to advise and make proposals to the president; and it had no specific time of meeting. The Council of Representatives (Dewan Perwakilan Rakjat) was to meet once a year; together with the president it held legislative power, although the president alone might exercise this power in time of emergency. The People's Congress (Majelis Permusjawaratan Rakjat), consisting of the Council of Representatives and delegates of regional territories, was to meet every five years, was to elect the president and vice president, and was to enact the constitution and lay down outlines of national policy. The composition of the Supreme Court (Mahkamah Agung) was not specified.¹³

Most of the organs of this provisional constitution were never put into use. Actual governing of the Republic was mainly performed by President Sukarno, Vice President Mohammad Hatta, and the Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat or KNIP (Central Indonesian National Committee), which replaced the old Preparatory Committee on August 29, 1945. KNIP initially consisted of 135 members, including those of the old committee. In October 1945, it was given legislative power jointly with the President, although there was no constitutional provision for this step. A 15-man working committee, with Sjahrir as chairman and Amir Sjarifuddin as vice chairman, then carried out the real work of KNIP.¹⁴

The Dutch Attempt to Regain Control

So far as the Dutch were concerned, however, the Indonesian Government of the Republic simply did not exist. On October 4, 1945, Dr. Hubertus J. van Mook, acting Governor General of the Indies and head of the Netherlands Indies Civil Administration, which had been in training in Australia during World War II, arrived in Indonesia. He rapidly appraised the situation and evidently informed his superiors that, contrary to their belief, President Sukarno and the

Republic did indeed enjoy widespread popularity in the Indies. In the Netherlands, however, there was strong disbelief in the anticolonialist sentiment that van Mook had recognized.

Dutch troops, having lacked earlier transportation, now gradually began to arrive, despite Indonesian protests. Although the British had previously recognized the de facto status of the Republic, they now recognized the Dutch as the de jure rulers of Indonesia and turned over authority in areas they were leaving only to the Dutch.

Gradually, as the Dutch began to realize that the spirit of anticolonialism in Indonesia was genuine—although they still refused to recognize Sukarno as the legitimate representative of this spirit—they began to take steps calculated to mitigate the stigma of colonialism. They were not willing, however, to recognize the independence of Indonesia or the legitimacy of the government of the new Republic. For its part, the Republic could no longer be satisfied with anything less.

INSURGENCY

When the British arrived on Indonesian soil after World War II, the Indonesian Republic claimed the entire territory of the Netherlands East Indies. The Republic did, in fact, control most of Java and Sumatra, except for a portion of western Java. There is no doubt that this control was loose, because the Republic had had time neither to impose controls nor to organize its armed forces. Its government operated more through a spirit of nationalism and patriotism than through formal administrative organs.

Support for the Republic

As the Dutch attempted to reimpose colonial control over the area, a tremendous number of guerrilla bands were formed, apparently spontaneously, over the Republic's territory. After the Dutch succeeded in 1947 in taking part of Sumatra and a good deal of Java, they were subject to such constant harassment that they refused to believe this could be unplanned. Republic troops, of course, made deliberate infiltrations into Dutch-controlled areas, but there was also always much spontaneous activity against the Dutch. Popular support was a major factor in the success of the nationalists.

Supporting the Republic were a tremendous number of Indonesian political parties, including the Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI), the most important party of the Republic; Majelis Sjuro Muslimin Indonesia (Masjumi), the largest Muslim party and second only to the PNI in influence; Partai Serikat Islam Indonesia (PSII), the next most important Muslim party; Gerakan Indonesia Raya (Gerindo); Partai Buruh Indonesia; Partai Katholik Republik Indonesia; Partai Kristen Indonesia (Parkindo); Partai Sosialis (PS); Partai Sosialis Indonesia (PSI); Persatuan Perdjjuangan; and Persatuan Wanita Republik Indonesia (the largest women's organization). In all, there

were about 66 political parties or organizations supporting the Republic.¹⁵ In addition, of the 50 so-called Federal parties—which were ostensibly in support of a Dutch-favored political solution—the Dutch themselves estimated that at least 22 actually supported the Republic.

Furthermore, in Sukarno, Hatta, Sjahrir, Amir Sjarifuddin, Sultan Hamengku Buwono IX of Djogjakarta, and many others, the Republic had by far the most popular political leadership of any group in the Indies. President Sukarno, whose magnetic personality had an overwhelming effect on the Indonesians, provided a focus and rallying point for the nationalists.

Although the nationalist movement in Indonesia was in no sense a Communist-dominated movement, it was evident that the Communists hoped to use the insurgency to further their own ends. This was made difficult, however, by the fact that the Communist Party of Indonesia (Partai Komunis Indonesia, PKI) was itself split into two factions: an orthodox group successfully led by Mohammad Jusuf, Sardjono, and Musso Suparto; and an unorthodox offshoot led by Tan Malaka. In 1946, Tan Malaka's group made an abortive attempt to wrest power from President Sukarno. In 1948, the orthodox PKI, which had made ostensible common cause with the Republic, initiated a rebellion against it at Surakarta and Madiun. This rebellion the Indonesian nationalists themselves put down.¹⁶

Nationalist Military Organization and Strength

The Sukarela Tentara Pembela Tanah Air (more commonly known as PETA, or Volunteer Army of Defenders of the Fatherland), formed the nucleus of the Republic's forces. This group, estimated at the end of World War II to number about 120,000, had received special military training from the Japanese. Several other special groups had also been initiated under or trained by the Japanese. These included the Barisan Pelopor (Pioneer Legion); the Hei Ho—Indonesians incorporated into the Japanese Army as labor battalions; and the two Muslim fighting organizations, not organized by the Japanese but formed during this period—Hizbullah (also known as Tentara Allah, God's Army), and Sabillallah (God's Fighters).

On August 22, 1945, only five days after the Republic's proclamation of independence, the Badan Keamanan Rakjat (BKR, People's Security Body) was formed, incorporating a large number of these persons as well as some officers who had received prewar training as cadets in the Royal Netherlands Indies Army (KNIL). On October 5, 1945, the BKR was renamed the Tentara Keamanan Rakjat (People's Security Army). This force went through several more name changes before eventually being called the Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI). Since for all intents and purposes this was the same body despite name changes, it will for convenience be referred to throughout this study as the TNI.¹⁷

The TNI was originally organized under one elected revolutionary leadership called the Komite Nasional (National Committee), with both central and local administrations. Local committees elected their own commandants, who elected their own commander in chief.

Local commandants formed their own local troop units, which in turn elected unit commanders.¹⁸

The TNI was organized on conventional army lines with a general staff at Djogjakarta. Initially fighting was done on the battalion level, a battalion originally consisting of 14,000 men but often operating with a strength of 1,400 men. This practice was soon discontinued, however, as it did not suit the guerrilla tactics which the Republic rapidly adopted. The peleton, frequently equated to a squad of 12 men but sometimes equaling a platoon of 4 squads, and other similar small units, proved the most effective and most popular for carrying out hit-and-run tactics. The crack division of the TNI was the Siliwangi Division, largely led by Dutch-trained officers and possessing a high proportion of literate Indonesians.¹⁹

Another formal military unit--other than the air force and navy, which took little part in the revolution, mainly because of lack of equipment--was the Police Mobrig (Mobile Police Brigade), built up by Premier Soetan Sjahrir shortly after independence was proclaimed. This was a particularly effective unit, as a deliberate effort was made to recruit men of more than ordinary intelligence and education. The Police Mobrig and the Siliwangi Division, like the rest of the army, were theoretically under the commander in chief, but in actual practice these two units were under the direct orders of the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Defense.²⁰ In 1947, Premier Amir Sjarifuddin encouraged the building up of the TNI Masjarakat (National Public Army of Indonesia), an auxiliary army force which was supposed to organize popular defense on a local basis. By January 1948, the army was, in fact, made up of three large groups: regular TNI troops, the Siliwangi Division, and the TNI Masjarakat. Organizational and administrative maneuvering undermined the potential effectiveness of the Republic's forces. According to statements of Gen. Didi Kartasasmita, Sjarifuddin hurt regular TNI morale by giving too much support to Admiral Atmadji of the navy and to the TNI Masjarakat. In addition, Sjarifuddin further complicated the chain of command. By promulgating Pengumuman (Announcement) No. 1/1948 shortly before leaving office, he reorganized the high command of the fighting forces into two separate parts. The Chief of Staff was to be in charge of all matters of administration and organization, while the General Army Command was to be in charge of matters concerned with operational tactics. However, since the Chief of Staff was directly under the Minister of Defense and occupied a position superior to that of the General Army Command, a great amount of confusion ensued.

Conditions deteriorated to such an extent that, when Mohammad Hatta became Premier in February 1948, he was forced to take over the portfolio of Minister of Defense. Hatta took the Siliwangi Division from West Java where it had been stationed and redistributed it throughout the Republic's territory in order to give local military units competition and a better example of military discipline. Local jealousy of the Siliwangi Division to some extent defeated this purpose. Furthermore, Hatta did not become aware of the existence of Pengumuman No. 1/1948

for some weeks after assuming the premiership. When he did, he promulgated a new announcement, Pengumuman No. 14/1948, by the terms of which many Siliwangi officers were put into key positions. However, since the original changes also remained in effect, the confusion was not completely remedied.

Hatta also promulgated a "rationalization" order, in an attempt to cut the size and to provide for better organization of the huge forces, both regular and irregular, making up the army and the guerrilla bands. Estimates of the size of the Republic's forces in July 1947 ranged from 200,000²¹ to 463,000,²² a variance caused by the impossibility of knowing the exact number of guerrillas operating outside TNI control. At the beginning of the struggle with the Dutch, a Biro Perjuangan (Struggle Bureau) had been established in order to absorb guerrilla and irregular units into the TNI. But in August 1947, after the start of Dutch operations, the TNI Masjarakat reversed the process in order to allow units more local autonomy. By 1948, the TNI Masjarakat had been divided into six small units under the overall authority of the TNI.²³

Some Irregular Units Fight for the Republic

Of the large number of irregular units operating on the side of the Republic, the biggest was the Laskjar Rakjat (People's Army), originally set up by the Sultan of Djogjakarta. This was an irregular, loosely integrated organization that, although theoretically incorporated into the TNI in 1947, allowed its local units almost complete autonomy. After January 1948, several Laskjar Rakjat units were left behind in pockets of territory taken by the Dutch in West Java. These units then formed the Laskjar Rakjat Djawa Barat (People's Army of West Java), over which the TNI had no real control.²⁴

One irregular group that was important in 1945 and took part in the battle of Surabaya against the British, was the Barisan Pemberontakan Rakjat Indonesia (Revolutionary Legion of the Indonesian People), under the leadership of Sutomo ("Bung Tomo"). It later gradually disintegrated. In 1948, Sutomo formed the Barisan Berani Mati (Legion [of Those Who] Dare to Die). Another small but important irregular group was the Kebaktian Rakjat Indonesia Sulawesi (KRIS, Loyalty of the Indonesian People of the Celebes), a well-educated, well-disciplined, largely Christian group of irregulars.

Two irregular groups were loosely controlled by the Masjumi party: Hizbullah or Tentara Allah (God's Army) and Sabillallah (God's Fighters). The former was composed of men and women between 15 and 35 years of age; the latter of men over 35. These groups were divided into divisions, regiments, battalions, companies, and sections; and persons joining had to take an oath to be ready to die for their faith, their country, and their people. Another Masjumi youth organization, less fanatical than the above, was Gerakan Pemuda Islam Indonesia (Islamic Indonesian Youth Movement).

In addition to the larger groups named above there were also at least 25 other irregular or guerrilla groups operating on the side of the Republic. At different times, loose federations of various irregular groups were formed, but organization was poor and the federations as such accomplished little. In the negative sense of noninterference, most of the insurgent guerrilla groups cooperated fairly well with each other.²⁵

And Some Irregulars Fight Against the Republic

Although most groups adhered to the nationalist cause, there were others that did not. One such was Darul Islam (Islamic State), formed in March 1948 in Tasikmalaja, which opposed the Dutch and the Republic alike. Led by President Kartosuwirjo, Darul Islam did not propose to take over the whole of Indonesia but desired the establishment of an Islamic state separate from all other countries, in western Java.²⁶ Its military arm, Tentara Islam Indonesia (Islamic Indonesian Army), used guerrilla warfare against the forces of both the Dutch and the Republic.

Another important irregular unit operating in Indonesia was Pemuda Sosialis Indonesia (Indonesian Socialist Youth), usually known as Pesindo. Pesindo was formed on November 10, 1945, from seven other youth organizations, and was ostensibly on the side of the Republic. Although it was not apparent until the Communists attacked the Republic at Madiun in 1948. Pesindo had a large Communist element and many Pesindo members fought against the Republic at Madiun and afterwards. Pesindo was aided at this time by two groups from within the Republic's armed forces: ALRI, the Republic's navy, including the KKO (marines) and the TNI 4th Senopati Division, which was resisting the rationalization order to disband. In the case of the last two groups, however, motivation was less political than material. The rationalization order also brought some minor conflicts in other places between guerrilla and army leaders, particularly in the Tapanuli area of northwest Sumatra in the fall of 1948.²⁷

Another important body of armed youth was the Barisan Banteng Republik Indonesia (Buffalo Legion of the Republic of Indonesia), which was the successor to the Japanese-sponsored Barisan Pelopor (Pioneer Legion). In 1948, at the time of the Madiun rebellion, this group decided to change its name and to support the Communists. It then took the name of Gerakan Banteng (Buffalo Movement).

The Hizbullah and Sabillallah bands also withdrew from the nationalist cause when they were left behind in territory captured by the Dutch in 1947. Several of these bands in the West Java area often joined the Darul Islam and fought against both the Republic and the Dutch. Their actions appear to have been motivated in part by religion and in part by resentment for having been abandoned.²⁸

The Military High Command

Military leadership in the armed forces of the Republic included a number of notable men. Sutomo, though he did not particularly distinguish himself thereafter, won the hearts of the people early in the revolution at the battle of Surabaya against the British. Commander in Chief General Sudirman was also well known and his bravery was much admired; although dying of tuberculosis, he continued to fight. Other particularly outstanding military leaders were Gen. Abdul Haris Nasution, who became commander in chief for Java and later succeeded General Sudirman, after the latter's death in 1950; Second Deputy Army Commander Simatupang, who later worked with the guerrillas; Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Urip Sumohardjo; and Vice Commodore Suriadarma, successor to General Sumohardjo, who died in November 1948.²⁹

The Republic Adopts Guerrilla Tactics

The Republic's forces rapidly learned that they could not stand up to the British or Dutch in setpiece battles. Their one attempt to fight a real urban battle came in 1945, early in the course of the revolution. Few Dutch troops had as yet arrived in Indonesia, the British continuing to represent the Allies in the area. After the killing of a British brigadier in Surabaya under circumstances which have never been satisfactorily explained by either side, the British issued an ultimatum calling upon the Republic to deliver the brigadier's "murderers" and threatening military action if this were not done by November 10, 1945. Although there had previously been intermittent fighting in Surabaya between the Indonesians on the one side and the British and Indians on the other, the battle which started on November 10 and lasted for a few weeks thereafter was the first serious military action. The Indonesian unit chiefly responsible for carrying on this battle was the Barisan Pemberontakan Rakyat Indonesia; as noted, its leader, Sutomo, became the revolution's first military hero. The Republic's armed forces, however, were too diverse and too loosely organized to conduct conventional battles. This one experience was enough to demonstrate the wisdom of turning to other tactics.

Major reliance henceforth was placed on guerrilla tactics. Whether carried out by separate groups of guerrillas or by forces connected with the army, the tactics were those of harassing Dutch patrols and Dutch-owned estates; ambushing convoys; sabotage; and, to some degree, terrorism. The guerrillas were particularly anxious to cut Dutch lines of communication; and to this end they frequently blew up bridges, dismantled portions of railroad lines, and cut telephone or telegraph lines. The guerrillas pursued a scorched-earth policy in an endeavor to prevent food and other materiel from falling into Dutch hands: sometimes whole villages were burned; at other times, simply foodstocks. The guerrillas also forbade the selling of rice in the cities and set up blockades to prevent its transport. If the blockades did not actually prevent all movement of rice, the guerrillas were at least usually able to collect a toll which acted as a deterrent to the would-be blockade runner.

Internal and External Support

Considering their meager training, poor supplies, and inadequate weapons and ammunition, the TNI and the guerrillas were remarkably efficient. They owed a great deal to the support of the people as a whole, who gave them food, shelter, and information. Furthermore, the guerrillas were able to infiltrate many cities almost at will at night because they were not reported to the Dutch by the local population.³⁰ The cooperation of the people was usually freely given. In cases where it was not (as, for example, with the Chinese in some areas), terrorism usually accomplished the desired result.³¹ The Dutch also claimed that Indonesian nationalists infiltrated and terrorized Dutch-controlled territory by kidnaping those civilian officials, either Dutch or Indonesian, who cooperated with the Dutch.

An important factor in the nationalist struggle was foreign aid, received in the form of loans from such countries as the Philippines, Canada, and Australia; or of food, from India and Burma.³² More important perhaps than the material aid, however, was world opinion—which condemned Dutch military actions and was later reflected in the United Nations.

Indonesian Casualties

It is improbable that anyone will ever know the exact number of Indonesians—civilians, TNI, and guerrillas—killed during the revolution. The Indonesians claimed that more than 30,000 were killed, while the Dutch claimed that not more than 4,000 Indonesian deaths occurred.³³ The very nature of the struggle makes it clear that many, perhaps thousands, died in forlorn isolation. As the late Indonesian poet Chairil Anwar put it:

... we are only scattered bones
But we are yours
You must now evaluate these scattered bones. . .

Any attempt to appraise this successful struggle for independence from colonial authority must include, first, the willing support of the people and justification in the eyes of the world. Another factor was that most of the political parties and groups in Indonesia were united at least in their aim, to free the Indies from the Dutch. A third factor was the possession of a leader such as President Sukarno, who could inflame the Indonesian masses.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

Although the British had recognized in 1945 that the Republic had the backing of a large portion of the Indonesian population, the Dutch were unable to believe that this was the case. In the opinion of the Netherlands government, Sukarno and his government were merely Japanese puppets who would be toppled the moment the Indonesian population felt it safe to do

so. The Dutch believed, and for some time continued to believe, that the Republic remained in existence only because Dutch troops could not be rapidly transported to the Indies and because the British had unfortunately recognized its de facto status.

The Dutch Estimate of the Postwar Situation

The prewar Governor General, Jonkhcer Meester Aloysius Warmoldus Ludovicus Tjara van Starkenborgh Stachouwer, who had been a prisoner of war in Mukden, resigned rather than treat with Sukarno's government. This left the prewar Lieutenant Governor General, Dr. Hubertus J. van Mook, as Acting Governor General. Van Mook arrived in Indonesia on October 3, 1945, and very quickly recognized the strength of the Republic. His attempts to communicate this intelligence to his government, however, were successful only to the extent that the Netherlands government, still refusing to deal with President Sukarno, reluctantly agreed to treat with Premier Sjahrir, who had not collaborated with the Japanese and who had worked in the anti-Japanese underground during the war. Van Mook argued that this was an unrealistic approach, in that Sjahrir—chairman of the Republic's KNIP working committee—represented the Republic quite as much as President Sukarno, and it offered an unnecessary insult to Sukarno, the strongest figure. Stubbornly clinging to the belief that the Republic was a Japanese product that would cease to exist if ignored, the Dutch for a long period would treat only with Sjahrir. P. S. Gerbrandy, wartime Prime Minister of the Netherlands, later blamed the continued power of the Republic on van Mook's leniency; it is now generally conceded, however, that van Mook was only being realistic.³⁴

Dutch Troops Are Delayed

In the meantime, Dutch troops remained without means of getting to Indonesia. The first real battle of the revolution was fought, not between the Indonesians and the Dutch, but between the Indonesians and the British. On October 25, 1945, British troops of the 49th Infantry (Indian) Brigade, led by Brig. A. W. S. Mallaby, landed at Surabaya without opposition; but, when they began freeing Dutch prisoners, the Indonesians, who had taken over command of Surabaya from the Japanese, became enraged. Fighting broke out on October 28. President Sukarno, Brigadier Mallaby, and others arranged a truce, but fighting continued, and Brigadier Mallaby was killed. A British ultimatum to the Indonesians to produce his killers brought no result, and on November 10, the British attacked Surabaya in force in a battle which lasted about two weeks.³⁵

Dutch forces were by this time arriving, although not in large numbers, and the first Dutch troops had no organization higher than a battalion. Eight hundred Dutch marines arrived at Djakarta on December 20, 1945, but the problem of transport continued to hold 10 troop battalions in Holland. Transport difficulties were also delaying some 27,000 Dutch troops

in the Malay Peninsula as of January 1946. British forces in the Indies at this time were estimated to be around 30,000 strong. ³⁶

The Dutch Make an Offer

By this time, the Netherlands government was beginning to take the Indonesian problem more seriously. On February 7, 1946, it was discussed at a U.N. Security Council meeting held in London. Partly because of this fact and partly because the Labor government of the Netherlands was more liberal than its predecessor, van Mook was now empowered to make an offer to Sjahrir on February 10, 1946: he proposed a 10-year interim government of an autonomous commonwealth of the Indies under the Crown, following consultation with all important regions and population groups of the Indies. This was a step forward but still unacceptable to the Indonesians because the offer accorded no direct or indirect admission of the Republic's existence. Sjahrir and van Mook continued negotiations, however, although van Mook made it clear that he could not officially exceed the February 10 proposals. By March, Sjahrir and van Mook—each acting individually, although of the two Sjahrir carried somewhat more authority within his government—had tentatively agreed that the Republic, once recognized, would take its part in an Indonesian federation associated with the Crown.

When van Mook returned to Holland in April, however, he found that, although Labor supported the proposal, the Catholic party strongly opposed it. Minister of Overseas Territories J. H. A. Logemann managed to get the proposal passed, insofar as de facto recognition of the Republic's control of Java was concerned. Further action was delayed, however, by the resignation of the Labor Schermerhorn cabinet in the Netherlands on May 21, 1946, and by the Republic's desire for recognition of its de facto control over Sumatra as well as Java. In June, matters were further complicated when Tan Malaka kidnaped Sjahrir in a bid to take Sukarno's place. ³⁷ It was not until July 2 that Sjahrir was freed by a loyal army unit of the Republic.

The Dutch Try to Isolate the Republic Militarily and Politically

In the meantime, the Netherlands had been pursuing a military and political policy of surrounding the Republic, to whittle its size and reduce its powers. Dutch troops had landed on the island of Bangka, off the eastern coast of Sumatra; on March 3, 1946, they landed a force of about 2,000 at Bali; then, on March 9, nine battalions landed in Djakarta. Further landings were made in Celebes and, on March 27, at Lombok. Each landing brought fresh protests from the Republic and popular opposition. A group of Indonesian KNIL soldiers had rebelled against the Dutch in Minahasa on February 11, 1946; another group, in the Bandung area, undertook military action against the British and Dutch on March 23; and on April 10, the people of Ceram attempted a revolt. The Dutch continued to arrive, however, and the British were anxious to transfer areas of control to them and to leave the Indies. By mid-July, the British had

transferred control over all areas except Java, Madura, and Sumatra to the Dutch.³⁸ By the end of 1946, there were estimated to be 55,000 Dutch troops in Java alone. By June 1947, 109,000 Dutch troops were thought to be in Indonesia; about 90,000 were in Java and Sumatra.³⁹

On July 16, 1946, at Malino, near Makassar, the Dutch held a conference of regional representatives from Sulawesi (Celebes), Kalimantan (Indonesia-Dutch Borneo), Maluku (Moluccas), Sunda Ketjil (the lesser Sundas), Bangka, Billiton and Riau. Representatives from Java and Sumatra were not invited. The Malino Conference, opened by van Mook, was devoted to the idea of a federal system for Indonesia; and, after some days of discussion, representatives adopted resolutions calling for the eventual establishment of a United States of Indonesia. This was to consist of Java, Borneo, Sumatra, and the "Great East" (Sulawesi, Maluku, and Sunda Ketjil)—all on an equal basis. At this conference, cooperation between the Netherlands and the proposed federal state was also called for. At a second Dutch-sponsored conference, held at Pangkalpinang on October 1, 1946, to hear minority group opinions (Arab, Chinese, Eurasian, and European), representatives endorsed the resolutions of the Malino Conference.⁴⁰

The Dutch Propose a Federal Solution

Under these increasing Dutch pressures, both political and military, the Republic waxed indignant, particularly over the obvious attempts to separate Java and Sumatra politically; and only the intense desire of the British to get out of the area helped to bring about an agreement. On September 2, 1946, the Netherlands government had appointed a Commission General of three men to assist van Mook in reaching an agreement with Indonesian leaders. Before becoming valid, this agreement would have to be approved by the Netherlands Parliament, but the Commission General was given wide latitude for discussion, and it was understood that some concessions to the Republic would have to be made. In November 1946, the Commission General and Sukarno met for the first time.

On November 15, the Linggadjati (Tjeribon) Agreement, in large part the work of van Mook and Sjahrir, was initialed by both parties. It called for de facto recognition by the Netherlands of the Republic's control over both Java and Sumatra; it also proposed the setting up of a federal state, through Netherlands-Republic cooperation, to consist of the Republic, Borneo, and the "Great East"; it endorsed the idea of a Netherlands-Indonesian Union (including the Netherlands and the Western Hemisphere territories of Surinam and Curaçao, as well as the East Indies areas) to be headed by the Crown; and it called for a general reduction of troops and the evacuation of Dutch troops from the Republic's territory.⁴¹

Breakdown of the Agreement

Long before the Linggadjati Agreement was formally signed on March 25, 1947, it had in fact become almost inoperable. Each side accused the other of bad faith. Dutch troops did not

move out of the Republic's territory on the grounds that, if they did, the Republic would be unable to keep law and order. The presence of the Dutch troops led to harassing actions by Indonesian guerrillas and irregulars, which lent weight to the Dutch charge that the Republic could not control its own troops. On December 7, 1946, the Dutch undertook military action against dissident Indonesians in south Sulawesi. On December 18, at a conference at Den Pasar, Bali, they established the state of the "Great East," and proclaimed its constitution on the 24th. The Republic felt that this was a violation of the Linggadjati Agreement, which had called for cooperation between the Republic and the Netherlands in setting up the federal states. In early January 1947, the Dutch bombed Medan and Palembang, Sumatra, reportedly as disciplinary action. Again, the Republic claimed violation of the Linggadjati Agreement. The wonder is that the agreement was ever signed at all; it was certainly not destined to be effective.

On May 4, 1947, in patent violation of the Linggadjati Agreement, which had acknowledged the Republic's control over Java and Sumatra, the Dutch-sponsored state of Pasundan (West Java) was proclaimed. Also in May, the Dutch recognized the state of West Borneo (later broken down into other units) as an autonomous state within the federation. Again, unilateral action on the part of the Dutch irritated the Indonesians and sporadic fighting continued. Finally, on May 27, the Commission General sent to Premier Sjahrir an ultimatum, with the alternative of acceptance or war. By its terms, the Netherlands would have de jure sovereignty over all of Indonesia until January 1, 1949, with an interim government to function until that date, the final authority of which would rest with the Netherlands Crown. During the intermediate period, there was to be a joint Indonesian-Dutch police force to maintain law and order throughout Indonesia.

The Republic saw in these provisions a violation both of its own sovereignty and of the Linggadjati Agreement and was particularly annoyed by the Dutch refusal to abide by the arbitration provision. The ultimatum caused a cabinet crisis in the Republic's government, with Sjahrir the leading exponent of concessions. On June 23, 1947, a Dutch aide memoire demanding acceptance of the Dutch proposals was presented to the Indonesian government. Sjahrir, opposed by a wide range of leaders, including those in his own party, resigned. Sukarno declared a state of emergency. Sjarifuddin became Premier and formed a new coalition cabinet on July 3. Replying to the Dutch government, the Indonesians made many concessions but remained firm on the issue of a joint police force.

The First "Police Action" Begins

On July 6, the Dutch expressed dissatisfaction with the Indonesian reply. Negotiations continued in a desultory fashion. Finally, annoyed at the delay, the Dutch, on the night of July 20-21, 1947, launched what they termed a "police action," which was in fact an all-out land, sea, and air attack.⁴²

During this first attack, the Dutch relied mainly on land forces—the Koninklijke Leger (KL) and the Koninklijke Nederlandsche Indonesische Leger (KNIL, or the Royal Netherlands Indies Army). The latter was composed chiefly of Indonesian troops with a majority of Dutch officers. It is uncertain exactly how many KNIL troops were involved, but the number was probably considerably less than the 65,000 in existence by 1949, probably the high point of KNIL strength. The Netherlands Indies Civil Administration (NICA), trained in Australia during World War II ostensibly to take over civil administration in the Indies, actually contained a number of undercover military men working with the Dutch, a fact long suspected by the Indonesians and confirmed during this first military operation. The Chinese Self Defense Force, a group of probably not over 2,000 volunteers, also fought on the side of the Dutch because they feared persecution by the Indonesians.⁴³

Dutch Military Strategy

The Dutch objective at this time was to continue militarily the previous strategy of isolating the Republic and whittling away its size and strength. In Sumatra, the Dutch first extended their bridgeheads of Medan in the northeast, Palembang in the south, and Padang in the west, in order to retain the oil fields around Palembang and the estate area on the east coast. By July 24, they were in possession of the oil wells inland from Palembang.⁴⁴

In Java, the Dutch strategy was to reduce the Republic's territory by a two-pronged attack. Combined land and sea operations along the northern coast were intended to take the ports of Tjeribon, Labun, Indramadju, Tegal, Probolinggo, and Bandjuwangi. Troops were then to be sent south from Tjeribon and Bandung to take Tjilatjap, the only port on the south coast of Java. The intent was to cut off East Java from Central Java, the latter being the main stronghold of the Republic.⁴⁵ By land, the Netherlands Army moved out from its strongholds at Batavia (Djakarta), Surabaya, Bandung, and Semarang in the directions of Tjeribon, Tjikampek, Sukabumi, and Tjibadak.⁴⁶ The drive south from Surabaya would then effectively cut off West Java from Central Java, leaving the Republic only the central portion of the island.

The Dutch were well armed and had an ample supply of tanks, airplanes, and other vehicles. They were, however, relatively dependent on airdrops for food and for replacement of lost and damaged equipment, since they had only a small reserve of equipment and the people of the country generally supported the forces of the Republic. Although the Dutch were militarily very successful, their lines of communication became increasingly weaker and more vulnerable to attack as they continued to advance. Moreover, each captured town required a certain number of troops for occupation, further decreasing the number moving on. In addition, the Republic's forces held and fiercely guarded the approaches to their capital, Djogjakarta.

Some Indonesians Support the Dutch

The Dutch found a degree of support from among Indonesians. Among the federalists, two of the most respected leaders were Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung of East Indonesia and Adil Puradiredja of West Java. One federalist leader, Dr. Mansur, openly approved Dutch police actions. Sultan Hamid II (Hamid Alkadrie) of Pontianak, West Borneo, was suspected of being a Dutch agent or puppet; and indeed, he was later to admit complicity in a 1950 plot to overthrow the Republic.⁴⁷ In addition, there were 15 purely Dutch associations in Indonesia, which of course supported Netherlands' policy.⁴⁸

The Dutch attacks made the position of moderate Indonesians extremely difficult and gave fuel to Indonesian extremists, who demanded nothing less than the total and final withdrawal of all Dutch from the area. Under strong persuasion, however, particularly that of the Americans and British, the Indonesians were persuaded to negotiate. On September 19, 1947, a U.N. Security Council Committee of Good Offices was chosen, comprising Belgium, chosen by the Netherlands; Australia, chosen by the Republic; and the United States, chosen by Belgium and Australia. Under the auspices of this committee, talks were held between the Dutch and the Indonesians aboard the U.S.S. Renville.

The Renville Agreement Supports a Dutch Solution

Eventually, on January 17, 1948, the Indonesians were persuaded to sign the Renville Agreement, whereby the Dutch gained most of the demands of their ultimatum. Also, a status quo line was fixed, whereby the Dutch continued to hold that part of the Republic's territory taken during the course of the "police action." This left the Republic with a greatly truncated territory, cut off, moreover, from the richest food areas of Java and Sumatra. This was a deliberate move on the part of the Dutch, made with the expectation that the maimed Republic would collapse of its own accord.⁴⁹ The signing of the Renville Agreement indeed brought on another cabinet crisis within the Republic, forcing Sjarifuddin's resignation. Mohammad Hatta then took over as Premier.

Even while negotiations had been going on, the Dutch had, on October 8, 1947, set up a so-called state of East Sumatra from territory detached from the Republic; on February 20, 1948, shortly after the signing of the Renville Agreement, they established a state of Madura, again from the Republic's territory. Van Mook decided to go ahead with the organization of an interim federal government on the basis of the 13 federal states already formed, the Republic to constitute the 14th. From July 8 to 17, 1948, a Dutch-sponsored conference of the federal states was held in Bandung and a resolution was adopted for the formation by January 1, 1949, of a United States of Indonesia.⁵⁰

From this point on, the Dutch appear to have proceeded on the assumption that the Republic was dying. They were evidently confirmed in their belief when the Musso faction of the

Communist Party of Indonesia attempted an abortive Communist rebellion against the Republic, beginning September 14 in Surakarta and September 18 in Madiun.

The Second Series of Large Scale Operations

As 1948 progressed, the Dutch complained of an increasing number of incidents: incursions by the Republic's troops across the status quo line, kidnaping of civilian officials or of persons cooperating with the Dutch, harassment of Dutch patrols, sabotage, and guerrilla warfare. The Dutch refused to believe that any of these actions were spontaneous on the part of the people, while the Indonesians were equally adamant in maintaining that all such actions constituted spontaneous popular resistance. The truth, of course, lay somewhere in between. Since the Dutch had preceded the first large-scale operations by similar complaints, the Indonesians feared that these new complaints presaged a new "police action." In this they were not mistaken.

On December 19, 1948, the Dutch launched another set of major military operations against the Republic. The ostensible reasons were that the Republic did not have sufficient control of its people to guarantee peace and stability and that the Republic had not yet agreed to enter the federation on Dutch terms. Since their experience in the first operation had shown the dangers engendered by attenuated lines of communication and the difficulties of penetrating past Indonesian troops overland to the capital, the Netherlands forces went immediately to the heart of the matter, attacking Djogjakarta from the air.

According to an eyewitness account by an American correspondent, B-25 Mitchell bombers, B-51's, P-40's, Dakota transports, and a few Spitfires dive-bombed targets, strafed the streets, and dropped about 100 parachutists near Maguio Airport, just outside of Djogjakarta. These last, drawing fire, revealed Indonesian positions for later bombing. After most of the Indonesian positions were eliminated, two waves of planes, each consisting of 23 Dakotas, dropped 800 to 900 parachutists, who occupied the city. Meanwhile, a crack marine brigade was fighting its way in from the outskirts of the city. The Republic's TNI, realizing that it could not stand up to the Dutch in this kind of operation, evacuated the city as rapidly as possible in preparation for the carrying out of guerrilla activities as had previously been planned.⁵¹ After beginning the attack at 5:30 a. m. on Sunday, December 19, 1948, the Dutch airborne forces had by 3:30 p. m. surrounded Djogjakarta and taken the city. The commander in chief of the Dutch forces, Lt. Gen. S. H. Spoor, had watched the operation from an airplane.⁵²

Even before the airborne troops had been dropped, other operations had begun. Shortly after midnight on December 18-19, Dutch marines, supported by units of the Royal Netherlands Navy, landed on the northern coast of East Java and advanced inland.⁵³ In the meantime, still another naval operation had landed Dutch forces on the northeast coast of Sumatra. Marine brigades then proceeded to mop up areas between cities which they had occupied.⁵⁴

Meanwhile, Dutch troops began advancing by land on December 19 from Gombang out of Central Java in an eastern direction to reach Karanganjer, a few kilometers east of the former status quo (Renville) line. In Sumatra, at the same time, Dutch troops invading Asahan from the territory of Negara Sumatra (East Sumatra) crossed the status quo line into Central Sumatra.⁵⁵ Later, on December 23, 1948, hydroplanes landed Dutch troops on Lake Toba (the largest lake in Sumatra) near Balige, from which point they proceeded to and took the airfield of Siborong-borong.⁵⁶

All in all, Dutch military actions proceeded very well at the beginning of their second "police action." President Sukarno and much of the Republic's government were captured during the occupation of Djogjakarta, and most of the key points of Java and Sumatra were quickly taken.⁵⁷ The Republic's TNI forces fled before the advancing Dutch, and the Dutch felt that they had achieved the same quick success as with their first series of operations.

Internal and External Reactions

The Republic, however, was far from dead. Foreseeing the possibility of Dutch military action, President Sukarno on the date of his arrest had sent messages to Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, at that time in Sumatra, to set up an emergency government under the Republic's mandate. This he proceeded to do. Moreover, once the TNI had regrouped, it began guerrilla offensives against the Dutch, including one important offensive against Djogjakarta itself on the night of December 29, 1948.

Even more important than guerrilla actions in deterring the Dutch, however, was the indignant international reaction. Among countries condemning the Netherlands' action were India, Burma, Ceylon, Pakistan, Iraq, the Philippines, Australia, Denmark, Great Britain, France, and the United States. The United States even halted Marshall Plan (ECA) aid to the Netherlands regime in the East Indies following the second military operation and only resumed it in the spring of 1949. According to one observer, the United States was reluctant to cut off aid to the Netherlands itself, however, for fear of repercussions to the European economy if the Netherlands should collapse economically.⁵⁸ The Good Offices Committee, in its report to the Security Council of the United Nations on January 24, 1949, condemned the Dutch action and stated that the Dutch were unable to maintain law and order in the territory that they had taken over. As a result, on January 28, the Security Council passed a resolution, cosponsored by the United States, Nationalist China, Cuba, and Norway, demanding release of members of the government of the Republic and restoration of the Republic as a preliminary measure before negotiations should be resumed.⁵⁹

Guerrilla Warfare Drags On

From this point on, Dutch military action was chiefly concerned with holding occupied territory against guerrilla harassment. The Dutch used airplanes, especially the Piper Cubs of

the 17th Detachment of the Varwa Squadron of the Army Air Force, to scout the countryside for armed bands; but in jungle areas these guerrilla bands seemed to melt away.⁶⁰ Furthermore, the burning of villages known to have given assistance to the guerrillas did not endear the Dutch to the Indonesian peasants, who continued to support the guerrillas.

In time it became apparent in the Netherlands that, far from making a quick victorious sweep as had first been believed, Netherlands troops were being subjected to a guerrilla war of attrition which might last for decades. Home opinion was swiftly disillusioned and many newspapers called for an explanation of Dutch policy. Dissatisfaction appears to have been more with the ineptness of Dutch policy than with the use of Dutch troops in the military action. The publication on February 19, 1949, in the Dutch newspaper Vrij Nederland, of letters from Dutch soldiers in Indonesia—telling of brutalities that they were compelled to commit, admitting military losses which had not been officially admitted, and exposing the attrition of the guerrilla warfare—brought a nationwide reaction. De Linie, a normally conservative Dutch newspaper, stated on March 4, 1949, that the restoration of the Republic was an absolute necessity and that forthcoming negotiations would be a farce without the participation of the Republic.

On March 3, 1949, the Dutch-sponsored federalist states also sent a resolution to the Dutch supporting the Republic's contention that it must be restored before negotiations should be continued.

Negotiations and Disillusionment

On April 14, initial talks were begun between Mohammad Rum, representing the Republic, and Dr. J. H. van Roijen, representing the Dutch, under the chairmanship of Merle Cochran, an American. On May 7, the Rum-van Roijen Agreement was reached to restore the Republic, the first step in the settlement of the dispute. Dr. L. J. M. Beel, who had become High Representative of the Crown in November 1948, succeeding van Mook as the highest Dutch official in the Indies, resigned his post in protest against the Rum-van Roijen Agreement, and was replaced by Dr. A. H. J. Lovink. In the Netherlands, reactionary elements opposed the agreement, but most Dutch opinion seemed to favor it.⁶¹

Chiefly as the result of foreign and U. N. pressure, the Netherlands finally agreed to negotiations and to the restoration of the Republic. Increasing disillusionment on the part of the Dutch and acceptance of the fact that only the Republic had the authority to enforce an Indonesian cease-fire were additional factors in bringing about the change.

War Losses

As in the case of the Indonesians, Dutch casualty figures were fragmentary and unreliable. The Dutch claimed that in the first "police action" they had suffered only 74 killed, 178 wounded, and 16 missing.⁶² In the second "police action," the Dutch stated that somewhat over 300 Dutch

had been killed by February 14, 1949, while Indonesians claimed that 1,500 Dutch had been killed.⁶³ Whatever the cost in life and property, the Dutch suffered a harsh awakening in the second "police action." A soldier's letter, published in *Vrij Nederland* on February 19, 1949, put the feelings of the common soldier succinctly: "Hand in the brengun and then get to Holland as quickly as possible. Everybody has become as hard as stone, but do not tell this to my relatives because when I write them I lie abominably by saying 'all is well.'"

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

Much concerned since the beginning of the second Dutch "police action," the Security Council of the United Nations had begun discussions in April 1949 on the Indonesian question, which had been raised once again the previous December. These discussions centered upon three matters: restoration of the government of the Republic to its former capital at Djogjakarta, issuance of a cease-fire order, and agreement to hold a Round Table Conference at the Hague.⁶⁴ Each of these conditions was to be fulfilled.

After some delay, the government of the Republic was restored to Djogjakarta on July 6, 1949, and Sjafruddin Prawiranegara returned the mandate of the government to President Sukarno. The Indonesians then held a two-part conference between the leaders of the federalist states and the Republic. Both sides made concessions and agreed upon the general lines of a provisional constitution which was to be drafted at the Round Table Conference. Immediately following this conference, a cease-fire was agreed upon, to become effective in Java on August 11, and in Sumatra on August 15.

The next step was the holding of the Round Table Conference at The Hague from August 23 to November 2, 1949, under the auspices of the United Nations Commission for Indonesia. Participating in the Round Table Conference were representatives of the government of the Netherlands, representatives of the Republic of Indonesia, and representatives of the *Bijeenkomst voor Federall Overleg* (BFO), or Federal Consultative Assembly, who represented areas in Indonesia other than the Republic.⁶⁵

Creation of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia

The result of the Round Table Conference was a decision to transfer sovereignty over the former Netherlands East Indies, except for the territory of West New Guinea (about which decision was reserved for a later date), to a Republic of the United States of Indonesia (RUSI). The new Republic was to consist of the 15 Dutch-created units, as well as the previous Republic, which had comprised Java, Madura, Sumatra, and offshore islands. A constitution based on the inter-Indonesian conference of the previous July was to be drafted, and a government was spelled out in fairly specific terms. A Netherlands-Indonesian Union was to be established, as a

voluntary association between the sovereign states of the Netherlands and Indonesia. With the Queen of the Netherlands as its head, the Union was to have a Conference of Ministers, Representatives of the Parliaments, a Permanent Secretariat, and a Court of Arbitration.⁶⁶ On December 16, 1949, President Sukarno was unanimously elected President of RUSI and, on December 27, sovereignty was officially transferred to the new state.

The Republic of the United States of Indonesia took its place in the world under a tremendous economic burden. The country had been successively devastated by the Dutch who had fled the Japanese invasion of January 1942; by the Japanese, who had not hesitated to convert Indonesian facilities to Japanese use; by the returning Dutch who had resorted to all-out military attack; and by the Indonesians themselves, who had pursued a scorched-earth policy. Indonesian productive capacity was estimated to have been crippled or destroyed by at least 60 percent. Moreover, the Dutch had originally demanded as a condition of settlement that the RUSI take over a debt of over 6 billion guilders, including the cost of the Dutch military campaign in Indonesia. After long negotiations this figure was modified to 4.3 billion guilders (about U. S. \$1.13 billion), a crushing debt for a ruined economy.⁶⁷ In addition to these problems, the country was suffering from inflation as a result of the long Dutch blockade that had caused acute shortages. It is no exaggeration to say that the country's survival was miraculous.

RUSI Faces Continued Disorder

The only positive and long-lasting result of the Round Table Conference was the fact that Indonesia gained recognition of its sovereignty; other portions of the settlement were rapidly discarded or proved to be only paper solutions. Part of the reason for this unhappy result was the fact that, after Indonesia's independence was recognized, there were several attempts, ostensibly with private Dutch backing, to overthrow the Indonesian government.

On January 23, 1950, less than a month after sovereignty had been transferred to Indonesia, Capt. R. Paul P. ("Turco") Westerling of the Netherlands, formerly a member of the KNIL, led a group of other former KNIL members calling themselves the "Armed Forces of the Just King," in attacks on Tjimahi and Bandung in an attempt to stage a revolt. A series of particularly unsavory atrocities was committed. Although the Netherlands disclaimed official responsibility and sent a commission to investigate, the Indonesian government was dissatisfied. On April 19, after his arrest, Sultan Hamid of Pontianak, West Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo), admitted his complicity in this plot.

On April 5, 1950, another abortive plot took place in Makassar, with troops led by former KNIL Capt. Andi Abdul Aziz and masterminded by a man named Soumokil. There was evidence that some Dutch troops were involved, although there was always the possibility that they might have acted independently. When the revolt failed, Soumokil fled in a Dutch plane to Ambon, where, on April 25, 1950, he proclaimed the Republik Maluku Selatan (Republic of the South

Moluccas). In East Indonesia, the Netherlands openly allowed Dutch troops to take part in actions against RUSI soldiers, claiming that they were upholding the self-determination of the state of East Indonesia. The East Indonesia matter was settled by a conference between the RUSI, the original Republic, and the state of East Indonesia. In Ambon, however, matters remained tense and on May 3, 1950, a RUSI peace mission led by Dr. Johannes Leimena, RUSI Minister of Health, was dispatched to Ambon. Leaders of the Republic of the South Moluccas, however, refused to enter negotiations. Dr. Leimena estimated that there were several thousand KNIL troops in the Ambon area to support the Republic of South Moluccas. On May 15, 1950, the RUSI Defense Minister reiterated a January declaration that the Netherlands was violating the Round Table Conference military agreement by not maintaining order among KNIL troops in Ambon awaiting transfer to the RUSI army.⁶⁸

Indonesia Reverts to a Unitary Republic

In none of these cases did the Union Court of Arbitration function. The Netherlands-Indonesian Union remained, in fact, a paper organization, and Indonesia unilaterally abrogated it on August 10, 1954. Partly because the idea of a federation had been forced on Indonesia by the Dutch, and partly because of the suspicions continually engendered by the Dutch interference—or lack of control—the RUSI began shortly after the transfer of sovereignty to transform itself back into a unitary Republic. By the beginning of May 1950, all of the states and territories of the RUSI except East Sumatra and East Indonesia had been fused with the Republic within the RUSI. On May 19, 1950, after negotiations, these two states also joined in an agreement to establish a unitary state, the state of the Republic of Indonesia.⁶⁹

As a result of the change from a federal to a unitary state, the Netherlands accused the Indonesians of bad faith and implied that the transfer of sovereignty to the RUSI had constituted a limitation on Indonesian sovereignty which inhibited a change in the form of government. Indonesia, however, argued that sovereignty had been transferred "unconditionally and irrevocably," and therefore that as soon as the transfer was effected the people were free to choose any form of government they liked. Claiming Indonesian bad faith, the Netherlands refused to carry out official negotiations over the question of West New Guinea although the Charter of the Transfer of Sovereignty had specifically stated that such negotiations would be held.⁷⁰ The Netherlands based its refusal to negotiate on the grounds that the Republic of the United States of Indonesia no longer existed and that the stipulation for negotiations was therefore void. This argument had the longrun effect of further embittering Netherlands-Indonesian relations until Indonesia finally gained possession of West New Guinea in 1963.

An Evaluation

Hindsight is always easy, but it does appear clear that the Netherlands made a number of mistakes in dealing with Indonesia—first, in not making more concessions to self-government

before World War II; second, in not recognizing the vitality and popularity of the Republic at the end of World War II; and third, in resorting to force whenever they tired of negotiations. If the provisions of the Linggadjati Agreement had been carried out in good faith by both sides, without the legalistic approach which made them inoperable, it is conceivable that there might be a strong Netherlands-Indonesian Union at the present time. The final error made by the Netherlands, if the Dutch were determined upon use of military force, was in attempting to carry on a conventional war against guerrilla tactics when the countryside supported the guerrillas. These factors, plus condemnation by world opinion, meant that the Dutch were almost doomed to lose in Indonesia.

NOTES

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¹⁰ For one of the most moving accounts of the exile and treatment of prisoners, see: Soetan Sjahrir, Out of Exile, tr. Charles Wolf, Jr. (New York: The John Day Company, 1949). See also Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, pp. 90-93; Woodman, Republic of Indonesia, pp. 160-67.

¹¹ P. S. Gerbrandy, Indonesia (London: Hutchinson and Co., Ltd., 1951), pp. 56-64; Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, pp. 95, 98-99; Vlekke, Nusantara, pp. 379ff., *passim*.

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¹⁸Nasution, Towards a People's Army.

¹⁹Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, p. 185; conversation with Col. Colin East, Canberra, Australia, May 1965.

²⁰Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, p. 185.

²¹Wolf, Indonesian Story, p. 133.

²²Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, pp. 262, 269.

²³Ibid., pp. 261, 269.

²⁴Politieke Groeperingen in Indonesië; Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, p. 164.

²⁵Information on the guerrilla units in this section is taken from: Politieke Groeperingen in Indonesië; Wehl, Birth of Indonesia, p. 16; Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, pp. 162-64; Nasution, Towards a People's Army, passim; NEI Government Information AE 1022, AE 1021, Appendix I of AE 1020; NEI Army Public Relations Service Presscopies Nos. 616, 628, 723, 735, 754; and Aneta, October 7, 1949.

²⁶Politieke Groeperingen in Indonesië.

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²⁸Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, pp. 326-31.

²⁹Wolf, Indonesian Story, p. 60; Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, passim; Wehl, Birth of Indonesia, passim; Politieke Groeperingen in Indonesië; and TNI release of January 6, 1949.

³⁰NEI Army Information Service Presscopies Nos. 14, 56, 107; NEI Government Information Service AE 1102, AE 1123 General Survey No. 8; Wolf, Indonesian Story, p. 133.

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³³Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, p. 145.

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³⁵Wehl, Birth of Indonesia, pp. 52ff.

³⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 43, 84.

³⁷Wolf, Indonesian Story, pp. 35ff.

³⁸*Ibid.*; Wehl, Birth of Indonesia, pp. 106ff.; Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, pp. 145ff.

³⁹Wolf, Indonesian Story, pp. 43-45, 175ff.; A. Arthur Schiller, The Formation of Federal Indonesia (The Hague and Bandung: W. van Hoeve, Ltd., 1955), pp. 41ff.

⁴⁰Wolf, Indonesian Story, pp. 40-41.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, pp. 43-45, 175ff. Wolf's discussion of the basic weaknesses of the Linggadjati Agreement are some of the best which have been written on this point, pp. 44ff.

⁴²The Republic concessions were printed in The New York Times, July 9, 1947, p. 13; Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, also lists them in a footnote on p. 211. In effect, the Republic agreed to all the demands except for that of the joint police force.

⁴³Source of information about the Chinese Self Defense Force: KMT interview, Taiwan, 1953; source for KNIL strength: Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, p. 453; source for NICA information: Wehl, Birth of Indonesia, pp. 124ff. Other information is from Sudjarwo (ed.), Illustrations of the Revolution 1945-1950: From a Unitary State to a Unitary State (Jakarta: Ministry of Information, 1954); Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution; Wehl, Birth of Indonesia, *passim*; and interviews.

⁴⁴Wolf, Indonesian Story, p. 132.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 128, 132.

⁴⁶Wehl, Birth of Indonesia, p. 172.

⁴⁷Sudjarwo, Illustrations, p. xxiv.

⁴⁸Politieke Groeperingen in Indonesië.

⁴⁹Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, pp. 224ff.

⁵⁰On negotiations throughout this period, see especially Woodman, Republic of Indonesia, pp. 24-253.

⁵¹See Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, p. 337.

⁵²NEI Army Information Service, Batavia, December 19, 1948, Presscopies Nos. 1, 2.

⁵³Official Dutch Release, Batavia, December 19, 1948, No. 785.

⁵⁴NEI Army Information Service, Batavia, December 20, 1948, Nos. 6, 7.

⁵⁵Official Dutch Release, Batavia, December 19, 1948, No. 785.

⁵⁶NEI Army Information Service, Batavia, December 23, 1948, Presscopy No. 15.

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⁵⁸Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, p. 404.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 398-99.

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⁶¹Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, pp. 349, 425.

⁶²Wehl, Birth of Indonesia, p. 173. Wehl, himself pro-Dutch, admits that this figure is probably conservative.

⁶³NEI Army Information Service, February 14, 1949, Presscopy No. 46.

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⁶⁵Gerbrandy, Indonesia, pp. 169ff.; Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, pp. 433ff.; U.N. Security Council Document S/1417/Add 1.

⁶⁶Round Table Conference Results.

⁶⁷Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, pp. 439-43; Aneta, October 5, 1949.

⁶⁸United Nations, Security Council, Commission for Indonesia Press Release No. 29, April 16, 1951 (S/AC 10/395, April 3, 1951), pp. 28-42; Dr. G. H. J. van der Molen, "Indonesia and the Republic of the South Moluccas," International Relations (David Davis Memorial Institute of International Studies), I (April 1958), 393-400. Sudjarwo, Illustrations, pp. xxiii-xxiv.

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⁷⁰Round Table Conference Results, p. 3.

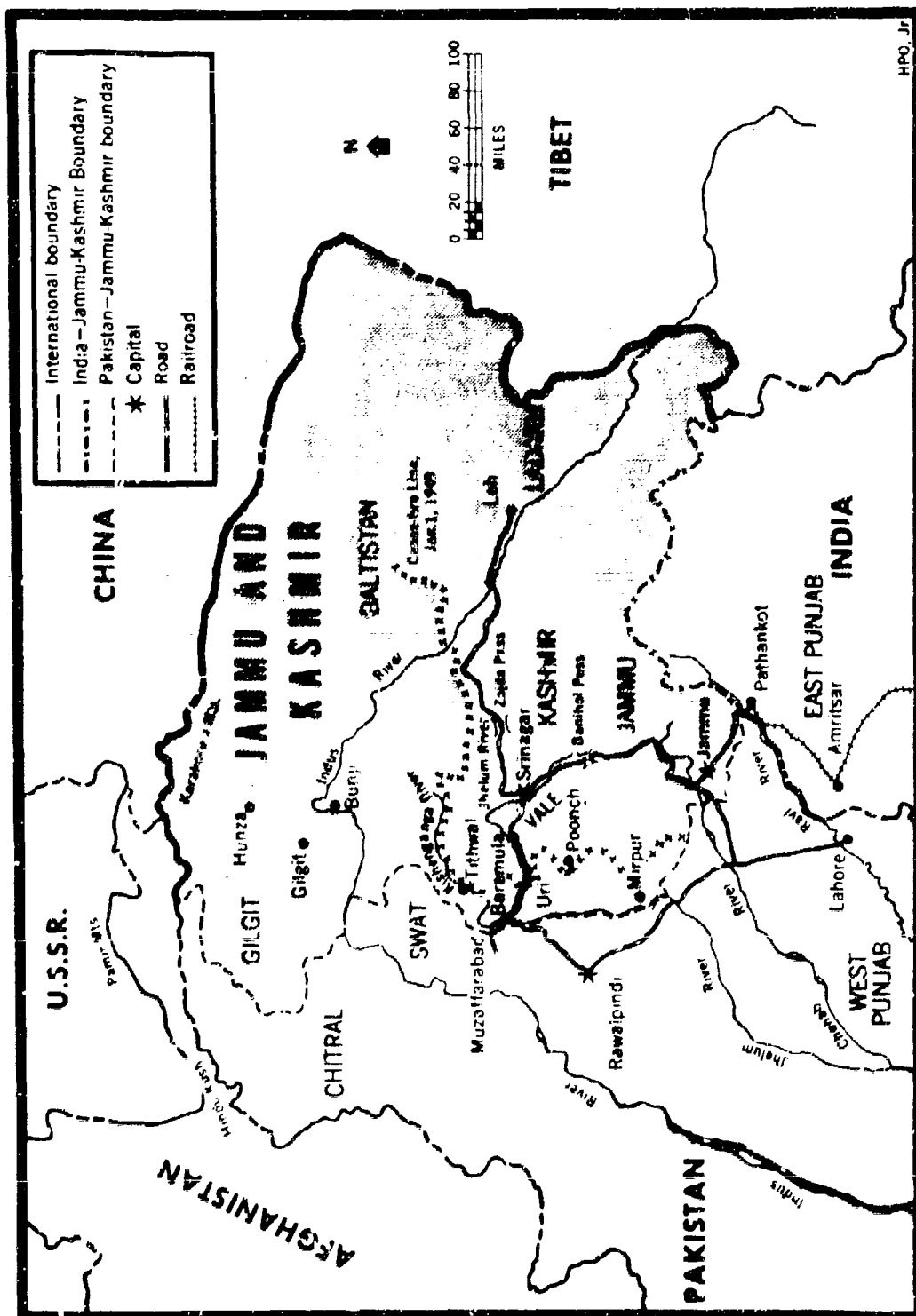
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Chapter Eleven

JAMMU AND KASHMIR
1947-1949

by William C. Johnstone



STATE OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR (1947-1949)

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Chapter Eleven

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The Hindu ruler of the predominantly Muslim state of Jammu and Kashmir—unable either to put down a local Muslim insurgency favoring accession of the state to Pakistan or to stem the invasion of Pakistani tribesmen who came to the insurgents' aid—finally acceded to India. The military action which followed resulted in a military stalemate that left Indian and Pakistani troops facing each other across a U.N.-patrolled cease-fire line, with no solution of the deeper issues or problems in sight.

BACKGROUND

The state of Jammu and Kashmir, which was one of the three largest of the 562 semi-independent states of the British Indian Empire, stretches from the plains of the Punjab on the south to the undefined borders of Tibet and China on the north. The physical configuration of Jammu and Kashmir State has been described by the Imperial Gazetteer of India as "a house with many storeys." The "house" faces toward the plains of the Punjab, with its front door at Jammu City, the winter capital. A narrow strip of level land near the Punjab frontier, the Pir Panjal range of mountains, 8,000 feet high and covered with forest, rises to the beautiful Vale of Kashmir. This valley is a summer tourist resort, famed for its houseboats, its arts and crafts, and for the Mogul gardens on the Dal Lake. Here also, on the Jhelum River, is Srinagar, the capital city except for a few months in the winter. Proceeding in a northerly direction from the Vale of Kashmir, the steep slopes of the Himalayas rise to the Baltistan Frontier District on the north and Ladakh Frontier District on the east, this area is drained by the Indus River. Far to the northwest lies Gilgit, in the shadow of the Hindu Kush, Pamirs, and Karakorum Mountains. North, beyond the maze of these ranges, lies China. East of Gilgit is the state of Chitral and beyond it, Afghanistan.¹

The Land, the People, and the Economy

The areas comprising the state of Jammu and Kashmir total some 64,000 square miles, about as large as the state of Minnesota. In 1946, the total population numbered slightly over 4 million, of whom 73 percent were Muslim.

Jammu Province, bordering on the Punjab to the south, has an area of only 12,378 square miles, but its population in 1946 was nearly two million, 53 percent of whom were Muslim. The province is bisected by the river Chenab. To the east of the river, in the districts of Jammu, Gujrat, Sialkot, and Gurdaspur, the population was predominantly Hindu and Sikh. West of the Chenab, the districts of Mirpur, Poonch, Muzaffarabad and the adjoining hill tracts were predominantly Muslim.

Kashmir Province, which includes Srinagar and the Vale of Kashmir, is 8,539 square miles in area. The valley is some 25 to 35 miles wide and about 100 miles long. Its 1946 population of approximately 1,800,000 was 93 percent Muslim. Its equable climate from May to October, its magnificent scenery, and the excellent fishing and hunting in the higher valleys have made it a tourist mecca for half a century.

The remaining territory of the state, mostly mountainous, was divided into a number of frontier districts, which were only loosely administered. Access to these mountainous regions was by mule track over passes 13,000 to 17,000 feet in altitude. For the whole frontier area, there was an estimated population of only 311,000 in 1946, living in an area of 63,554 square miles. To the north of Kashmir Province lies the large district of Baltistan; to the northwest and west lie the Gilgit Frontier Districts, bordered by the high Karakorum range with its 32 peaks, 15,000 to 26,000 feet in altitude. The sparse population of Baltistan and Gilgit is predominantly Muslim. Ladakh Frontier District, east of Kashmir Province, is populated by some 40,000 Tibeto-Chinese Buddhists who, mainly because of their mountain isolation from Kashmir Province, have closer links to Tibet and China than to India.

During the British period, which lasted until 1947, little of Jammu and Kashmir State was accessible to vehicular traffic. The main route to Kashmir from India lay through the Jhelum River gorges from Rawalpindi, then to Muzaffarabad and Baramulla on the Kashmir side of the Pir Panjal range, then on to Srinagar. Another road, not so well constructed but passable for motor vehicles, went from Jammu City over the Banihal Pass into Srinagar from the east. Transport in Kashmir Province and the frontier districts was by foot and animal. In Jammu Province, there was little need before 1947 for east-west communication and the roads connected the province with the rich Punjab area along its southern border.²

During the century of British overlordship, the economy of the state of Jammu and Kashmir was static and underdeveloped. Some earnings came from the tourist trade, from arts and crafts in the valley of Kashmir, and from the export of wool, hides, and silk cloth. Fuel, iron, steel, cotton cloth, sugar, tea, and oilseeds were the principal imports from British India. Taxation was heavy, and the large majority of the population managed only a bare subsistence living. Schools, health facilities, communications, and even the minimal government services found in British India were lacking. Except in the mountainous frontier districts, where the sparse population lived as herdsmen and traders, the majority of the people eked out a living by farming the eroded hills and mountains.³

Early Rulers of Jammu and Kashmir

Before 1846, the various areas that now make up Jammu and Kashmir had been subject to many conquerors. The people of Hunza, a tiny valley high in the mountains of the Gilgit Frontier Districts, claim to be descendants of Alexander's Macedonians. This story may be dubious, but the peoples of Central Asia, Afghanistan, and the Indian plains have infiltrated over the years. The Mogul emperors laid claim to most of the state, and the majority of its population was converted to Islam. In the 18th and early 19th centuries, the Sikh rulers of the Punjab exerted authority over Jammu and Kashmir Provinces and even parts of the Gilgit Frontier Districts. Over the years, Rajput clans from the East Punjab settled in the eastern half of Jammu Province. The leading clans were called Dogras; they were Hindus, great fame as warriors.

British Create State and Make Hindu Ruler Its Sovereign

In the second quarter of the 19th century, the British became involved in a series of negotiations and battles with the Sikh states of the Punjab. Gulab Singh, a Dogra Rajput, had been appointed rajah of Jammu in 1820 by Ranjit Singh, Sikh ruler of the Punjab. Gulab Singh amalgamated the numerous, small hill states between the Punjab and the then-existing boundaries of Jammu into his domain. He also managed to subdue the large areas of Baltistan and Ladakh, thus virtually encircling Kashmir Province. After the death of Ranjit Singh in 1839, the Sikh empire collapsed, and the British advanced into the Punjab. Although Gulab Singh was theoretically still a vassal of the Sikhs, he threw in his lot with the British and gave major assistance in the final defeat of the Sikh forces at the battle of Sobraon in 1845.⁴

The English East India Company, by then a virtual instrument of the British government, proceeded to annex the rich Punjab area. In recognition of services and perhaps because the British at that time did not feel it worthwhile to rule Jammu and Kashmir directly, two treaties confirmed sovereignty over Jammu and Kashmir to the Hindu Gulab Singh. He was required to pay the British government 75 lakhs rupees (about \$1.5 million) and, in return, one treaty stated that "the British Government transfers and makes over, forever, in independent possession to Maharajah Gulab Singh and the heirs male of his body, all the hilly or mountainous country to the eastward of the river Indus and westward of the river Ravi." In addition, Gulab Singh was granted the northern Gilgit Districts and confirmed as legal sovereign over a variety of tiny principalities amalgamated during the course of his military campaigns.⁵ Thus the state of Jammu and Kashmir, with virtually its present boundaries, came into existence.

Hindu Rule Oppresses the Muslim Community

A brief review of the history of Jammu and Kashmir State for the century between 1846 and 1946 underscores the nature of the "Kashmir problem," a dispute that, as of this writing in late 1961, still plagues India and Pakistan and threatens their peaceful relations.

Like the other principal Indian states, Jammu and Kashmir was not under the direct rule of the British Indian government but was in a treaty relationship with Great Britain, by which the British Indian government managed its foreign affairs. It was represented at the court of the Maharajah by a British "resident" and Britain undertook to defend its territory or to assist its state forces in maintaining internal order if requested. The state forces, almost wholly non-Muslim, were commanded by a British officer and organized along the lines of the British Indian Army. Apart from this relationship, the Maharajah could govern as he pleased.

From 1846 until after the First World War, the Dogra Hindu dynasty ruled Jammu and Kashmir State with an iron hand. This period was characterized by absolute communal discrimination on the part of the rulers against the predominantly Muslim population. In the late 1920's, Sir Albion Bannerjee, Prime Minister of the state under Maharajah Sir Hari Singh, resigned because of his opposition to the Maharajah's policies. He described the unfortunate lot of the Muslim villagers, poverty-stricken and illiterate, "governed like dumb, driven cattle." The Singh government and the people, he said, were completely out of touch and the administration had "little or no sympathy with the people's wants and grievances."⁶

Stirrings of Muslim Nationalism

Although Jammu and Kashmir State was relatively isolated from events in India proper, the nationalist movement of the Indian National Congress, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, created political unrest among the Muslims in Kashmir Province and parts of Jammu. In 1932, a rebellion against the Maharajah was suppressed with the help of British troops. It was at this time that a Kashmiri Muslim, Sheikh Abdullah, organized the All-Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and forced the Maharajah to establish the State Assembly, a majority of its members to be elected. Although given only advisory powers, the Assembly became an instrument for expression of the grievances of the Muslim population. It did not succeed in changing the Maharajah's autocratic government, however.

In June 1939, Sheikh Abdullah split from the Muslim Conference and organized a new All-Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. By this time Abdullah had become active in the All-Indian States Congress, Nehru's vehicle for nationalist agitation within the Indian states. Abdullah also became a close friend of Nehru and other Indian Congress Party luminaries and presumably adopted the Congress position that it should represent Hindus, Muslims, and all communal groups without favor. The leadership of the Muslim Conference in Jammu and Kashmir State then passed to Ghulam Abbas, a close associate of Mohammed Ali Jinnah, head of the Muslim League, which was just beginning its agitation for a separate Pakistan.⁷

Little change occurred during World War II, but by 1946 it was obvious that the British were going to be forced to grant some kind of dominion status to the subcontinent. Sheikh Abdullah, therefore, organized a "Quit Kashmir" campaign in March, and he and his principal

aides were jailed by Maharajah Hari Singh in May. A similar campaign for "Direct Action" organized among the Muslims by Ghulam Abbas brought identical results in October, when he and his associates were jailed. The Maharajah tightened his rule. He increased his state forces and suppressed all opposition. He also raised taxes to a near-confiscatory level.

Independence for India and Pakistan

Between January and July 1947, events in the Indian subcontinent reached a climax. Originally, the British government had announced that independence in some form would be granted before July 1948. But various factors, combined with increasing communal rioting in Bengal and in the Punjab, between the Muslims on one side and the Hindus and Sikhs on the other, forced the British to act. On June 3, 1947, Lord Louis Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of India, announced the British plan of partition, by which two new nations—India and Pakistan—would come into existence on August 15.

The process of partition meant a division of the armed forces of the British Indian Army into two parts to form new Indian and Pakistan Armies. It also called for division of weapons, munitions, communications equipment, transport, and all the appurtenances of an army. It was agreed that both armies would continue to be commanded by British generals with Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck acting as joint commander in chief over the defense forces of India and Pakistan until the partition could be completed. The transfer of Muslim units from the British Indian Army to the new Pakistan Army took time and made complete reorganization necessary, while the Indian Army had the advantage of retaining intact its non-Muslim units of battalion and regimental size. The Pakistan government complained that the delivery of supplies, munitions, and other military equipment due to Pakistan was delayed.⁸

The general principle of partition was that areas of Muslim majority would go to Pakistan, while areas of Hindu majority would go to India. Basically, this meant partition of two of the richest agricultural provinces of British India, Bengal and the Punjab. The British government was determined to force the partition of these two provinces, which it ruled directly; boundaries were to be determined by commissions, headed by Sir Cyril Radcliffe.⁹

Partition Brings Religious Communities into Open Conflict

The principle of majorities was not applied to the Indian states, which were semi-independent. In these the British took a legalistic view and insisted that the rulers of the states were sovereign and could opt for accession to either Pakistan or India. Complete independence, however, was ruled out.

Lord Mountbatten and his aides exerted considerable pressure on all the Indian states for a decision before the date of independence, August 15, 1947. Two of the biggest, Hyderabad and Jammu-Kashmir, held out. The first had a Muslim maharajah and a

predominantly Hindu population; the latter had a Hindu maharajah with a predominantly Muslim population.

The British agreed, reluctantly, that any state could delay its decision by signing a "standstill" agreement with both India and Pakistan. Such an agreement would provide for continuance of essential services such as communications and trade, pending the final decision. The Maharajah of Jammu and Kashmir signed such a "standstill" agreement with Pakistan after August 15, but the Indian government equivocated.¹⁰ It is clear from the record that Prime Minister Nehru, Gandhi, and other leaders of the Indian Congress Party were determined from the first to make Jammu and Kashmir State, in spite of its predominantly Muslim population, part of the new Indian Union.

After the announcement of the partition plan, communal rioting, with its attendant burning, wounding, and killing, erupted in both Bengal and the Punjab. Hindus and Sikhs hastened to leave for the shelter of India, and Muslims departed for refuge in Pakistan. In this transfer process, rumor fed on rumor and retaliation became commonplace. Some 10 million persons were displaced, and hundreds of thousands of Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs were killed or missing. Religious conflict was also reflected in the Indian states, including Jammu and Kashmir. In Jammu Province, communal trouble was rife and the Maharajah's government increased its harsh measures against the Muslims. The intensity of feeling between the main religious communities was to be a major cause of the insurgency.¹¹

INSURGENCY

The insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir State began in July 1947 and ended with a cease-fire under United Nations auspices on January 1, 1949. Although it is quite possible that there would have been a rebellion of some sort against the arbitrary government of Sir Hari Singh, it was the partition of the subcontinent into the two new nations of India and Pakistan that was the precipitating factor.

Although the partition agreement allowed the Indian states to join either India or Pakistan, the leaders of the Muslim state of Pakistan more or less assumed that Jammu and Kashmir with its 73 percent Muslim population would opt for Pakistan in spite of the wishes of the Maharajah. The Pakistanis, however, underestimated Nehru's strong personal attachment to Kashmir—his birthplace—and the general feeling among top Indian leaders that Pakistan ought not to have a separate existence. The whole situation was further complicated by the fact that the Nizam of Hyderabad, Muslim ruler of the largest Indian state, was clearly hoping to align his state and its predominantly Hindu population with Pakistan, in spite of the "standstill" agreement he had signed with India. A further complication was caused by the vacillation of Maharajah Sir Hari Singh during the weeks just before final partition. Although obviously prepared

to bend every effort to suppress internal opposition to his government, the Maharajah was unable to make a decision for either India or Pakistan.

In order to describe the rapidly changing events in Jammu and Kashmir as clearly as possible, the insurgency will be discussed in four parts: (1) the initial insurgency in Jammu Province, particularly in Poonch District; (2) the spread of the insurgency to Kashmir Province and intervention of Pathan tribesmen from Pakistan; (3) the brief and successful insurgency in the Gilgit Frontier Districts; and (4) the general course of the fighting in 1948 during the time that a United Nations Commission was investigating the problem. The first three periods deal with events in 1947, prior to submission of the Kashmir dispute to the United Nations Security Council on December 31, 1947.

Revolt Begins in Jammu

Governmental actions stirred the latent insurgency in Jammu Province. Receiving reports of trouble in Jammu in late June 1947, the Maharajah strengthened the state forces (at this time totaling approximately 5,000 men) and sent additional units into Jammu Province, particularly Mirpur and Poonch Districts. At the same time, the Kashmir system of taxation was introduced into Poonch District, to the great dismay of the inhabitants. All Muslim villagers in western Jammu were then ordered to surrender their arms and state forces were ordered to enforce this edict. With Muslims thus under attack, resentment boiled over in Poonch District. It should be noted that Poonch District and adjoining parts of western Jammu Province had been a source of recruitment for the British Indian Army; by July some 40,000 men native to this area had been demobilized and had returned to their homes. Thus there existed a large group of experienced Muslim soldiers who were not likely to permit the taking of their lands and weapons by a Hindu ruler they hated.¹²

During July, both Indian and Pakistani leaders were bringing pressure on the Maharajah, the Indians by persuasion and the Pakistanis by an economic blockade of the main outlet from Kashmir Province, the Jhelum Valley road. For his part, the Maharajah dismissed his Muslim Prime Minister and ordered more rigid suppression of the Muslims in western Jammu Province.

By August, the demobilized soldiers in Poonch District were ready with an embryonic military organization, and they went into open revolt in support of an Azad (Free) Kashmir movement. By the end of September, almost all of Poonch District except Poonch City was in the hands of the insurgents and large parts of Mirpur and Muzaffarabad Districts were also under their control.

Insurgency Spreads, Made Worse by Communal Fighting

The Azad Kashmir movement was now turned into a more formal organization, Azad Kashmir government, under one Sardar Mohammed Ibrahim. Muslim troops of the Jammu and

Kashmir State forces deserted and joined the insurgent Azad Kashmir movement. By October, therefore, the insurgents had established a fairly secure base in western Jammu Province with easy access by road to Pakistan.¹³

Although it appears that news of the insurgency in western Jammu Province did not filter through to the Indian government or even to the Maharajah in Srinagar in any accurate form, news of the Azad Kashmir insurgency was widely disseminated within Pakistan. To the Pakistanis, the insurgents were fellow Muslims fighting to make their state part of Pakistan. More inflammatory yet was the news of the massacre of Muslims in eastern Jammu Province.

It should be emphasized that the fighting in Jammu and Kashmir State was closely bound up with the widespread communal strife rampant in the area. As hundreds of thousands of Muslims fled India to escape the wrath of Hindus and Sikhs, many of them passing into Jammu Province, other hundreds of thousands of Hindus and Sikhs felt forced to flee from Pakistan and western Jammu Province. This two-way movement of people with their families and few possessions brought constant clashes, violence, and retaliation. "Starting early in August 1947, . . . nauseating brutalities were done on an unprecedented scale, by Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs."¹⁴ By September the rush of refugees had swelled to proportions beyond the power of either the Indian or Pakistan government to control.

Pakistanis Unofficially Aid Muslim Insurgents

The extent to which the Azad Kashmir insurgent forces were aided by the Pakistan Army before October 1, 1947, is almost impossible to determine. United Nations reports are inconclusive. The Indian government accused Pakistan of fomenting and aiding the Azad Kashmir insurgency in its initial stages but this was vigorously denied by the Pakistan government. It has been substantiated, however, that some Pakistan Army officers and noncommissioned officers were granted liberal "home leaves" and that stores and some munitions found their way to the insurgents.

A major factor in the Jammu-Kashmir insurgency was the involvement of the Pathan tribesmen from Pakistan on the side of the insurgents. In mid-August or early September, agents had been sent by the Azad Kashmir insurgents to the Pathan tribal groups of the Northwest Frontier Province to purchase arms from the many tribal arms factories in this mountainous area. The warlike Muslim Pathans not only sold rifles and ammunition to the insurgents, but upon hearing the news from Jammu decided to participate.

A jihad (holy war) was proclaimed by various tribal mullahs, and 2,000 tribesmen, mostly Mahsuds and Afridis, set off on October 19, 1947, in 100 trucks appropriated from the Northwest Frontier government. After sacking Muzaffarabad, they sped up the main road toward Srinagar. They were quickly followed by lashkars (war parties) from the other tribes, virtually all of which sent men to Kashmir. They slipped across the Indus

River bridges or paddled across on rafts. Within the next few weeks, tens of thousands of Pathans entered Kashmir. By January, 1948, there were reportedly 60,000 there.¹⁵

Once over the main pass into the Vale of Kashmir, the Pathans looted, burned, and killed indiscriminately. It is fair to say, therefore, that the tribal invasion of the Vale was more in the nature of a huge raid, the object of which was loot, rather than a jihad or organized insurgency. By October 26, the tribesmen had plundered Baramula at the head of the Vale and had put the Mahura power station out of action. The Maharajah's small force of Dogra Hindu troops was scattered and if the tribesmen had not stopped to enjoy their plunder, they undoubtedly would have captured Srinagar itself.¹⁶

It appears that these tribal groups obtained unofficial assistance from Pakistan. They had their own arms, and were easily able to seize the necessary transport. It is important to note, however, that the tribal invasion of the Kashmir Valley was not directed by either the insurgent Azad Kashmir leaders or by the Pakistan government.

Maharajah Accedes to India While Gilgit Districts Join Pakistan

It was on October 24 that news of this tribal invasion first reached New Delhi and Srinagar. After a hectic series of conferences between the Indian government and the Maharajah's government, Jammu and Kashmir State acceded to India. Regular Indian Army troops were then dispatched to Srinagar. By November 8, the Indian Army had captured Baramula, and by the 12th it had secured Uri on the southern slope of the Pir Panjal range, but there the advance bogged down.

The third part of the insurgency in 1947 involved the very large Gilgit Frontier Districts. Because of the strategic importance of the Gilgit Districts in relation to Russia and Central Asia, a British Political Agent, only nominally under the Maharajah, had been the primary authority there after 1877. On August 15, 1947, the British Political Agent withdrew from Gilgit, and the Maharajah sent a Hindu Dogra officer of the state forces as governor. The state force, predominantly Sikh in composition but with a Muslim complement, was garrisoned at Banji.

At the time of the tribal invasion of the Valley of Kashmir in October, the Muslim population and the Muslim element in the small state garrison were getting restive, mullahs were preaching jihad, and there were rumors of an invasion from the small adjoining states of Swat and Chitral, both of which had acceded to Pakistan. Local security was in the hands of the Gilgit Scouts, a lightly armed and mobile force recruited locally and consequently Muslim in composition. The Gilgit Scouts were commanded by a British officer, a Major Brown.

By the evening of October 31, tension was mounting and Major Brown faced the possibility of a local blood bath if Muslims revolted against the Hindu governor and the Sikh state force. To maintain internal security, he ordered detachments of the Gilgit Scouts to hold the Indus River crossings against the Maharajah's state force. Major Brown then "invited" the Hindu

Dogra governor to come within the Scouts' lines for his own safety. On November 2, the Pakistan flag was hoisted at Gilgit. Hindu and Sikh elements of the state forces straggled back over the passes into the Kashmir Valley, the Governor was given a safe conduct, and the Pakistan government assumed responsibility for the administration and protection of the whole of the Gilgit Frontier Districts of Jammu and Kashmir State. Major Brown thus became, in effect, an agent of the insurgency against the Maharajah's government.¹

India and Pakistan at War in Kashmir

At the end of 1947, when the Kashmir dispute was brought before the United Nations Security Council, the fighting front was more or less stabilized for the winter. Gilgit was under direct control of the Pakistan government. The Azad Kashmir insurgent forces controlled all of the western districts of Jammu Province except Poonch City and the Pathan tribesmen still held a line at the passes leading into the Vale of Kashmir. The Jammu and Kashmir government remained technically in control of eastern Jammu Province, of the whole of the Vale of Kashmir, and of Baltistan and Ladakh Frontier Districts, although the Indian Army and the government of India actually administered and controlled the fighting forces.

In spite of the presence on the subcontinent of the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan, whose object of mediating the conflict and bringing a halt to hostilities had been approved by both the Indian and the Pakistan governments, the fighting continued unabated throughout 1948. In April, the Indian Army drove the Azad Kashmir insurgent forces farther down the roads toward western Jammu Province territory in a vigorous spring offensive designed to relieve Poonch City. They did not succeed in the latter object but did establish positions threatening the whole base of the insurgent forces in Poonch and Muzaffarabad Districts.

At this point the Pakistan government came to the assistance of the insurgents. In May the Pakistan government sent a full division of its Regular Army across the border of Jammu Province to back up the Azad Kashmir forces, while retaining headquarters units just inside Pakistan territory. Units of the Pakistan Frontier Corps were also sent into the Gilgit Districts.¹² By this time, two divisions of the Regular Indian Army were in Kashmir Province and nearly two other divisions had been moved into Jammu Province. What had begun as an internal conflict now assumed the nature of a war between the countries of India and Pakistan.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

After the announcement of the partition plan in June 1947, the Maharajah of Jammu and Kashmir faced a dilemma. As a Hindu, he wanted to take his state into the Indian Union, but he also had to recognize that the large Muslim majority made accession to Pakistan seem inevitable to the Pakistanis. Fearing for his throne if his state joined Pakistan and fearing for his life if

he opted for India and the Muslim majority rebelled, the Maharajah vacillated. Although he had increased the state forces—organized like the British Indian Army and commanded by Brig H. L. Scott—from about 5,000 to approximately 7,000 by recruiting Dogra soldiers demobilized from the British Indian Army, he was forced to scatter them in his attempt to defend as much as possible of his large territory.¹⁶ Besides the state forces, there was a police force of over 2,500 used mainly for minor internal security functions and not considered very effective.

Two factors affecting counterinsurgency action by both the state forces and the Indian Army must be considered. First, the general situation in the Punjab was such that communal conflict had disrupted all normal life, communications, and transport. Tempers were so inflamed that large numbers of people could be stirred to violence at almost any time. A second factor was the state of intelligence and counterintelligence within the Jammu and Kashmir state forces and within the Indian Army, which was in the process of being divided and reformed. The division of the Punjab between India and Pakistan left the Indian Army intelligence service and the internal security section (the C.I.D.) of the Indian government without any means of gaining reliable information on events in the West Punjab or Jammu Province. It was thus not surprising that the Maharajah and his high officers had been unaware of the extent of the original rebellion in Poonch District in August 1947.

Maharajah Fails to Quell Revolt

The Maharajah's immediate response to the insurgency in Poonch District was to suppress it at all costs. The only moderating voice was stifled at the end of August, when the Maharajah dismissed his Prime Minister, the westernized Kashmiri Muslim Rai Bahadur Ram Chandra Kak. In western Jammu Province, state forces had been ordered in July to burn and sack Muslim villages whose inhabitants did not comply with the order to surrender arms. The effect of this on the warlike Poonchis, however, was not pacific. In eastern Jammu, systematic and well-organized attacks on Muslims were carried out during late summer by bands of Sikhs and Hindus. About 300,000 Muslims managed to escape into the West Punjab in Pakistan, but the remaining 200,000 disappeared without trace—leaving no further insurgency problem in eastern Jammu.

In Kashmir, the Maharajah released Sheikh Abdullah from jail, and this act, combined with the passivity that centuries of conquest had created in the Kashmiri Muslims, kept the people of the Vale from any serious uprising. But the Maharajah did not realize or meet the strong reaction against him in Poonch District in western Jammu, nor did he properly estimate the ramifications on the insurgency situation of the communal conflict in the Punjab. As a result, the Azad Kashmir insurgents were able to establish themselves in western Jammu in control of almost all of Mirpur, Muzaffarabad, and Poonch Districts (except Poonch City) between August 9 and September 30, 1947.

India Comes to Maharajah's Aid

The Indian government under Nehru, although eager to make sure that Jammu and Kashmir State did not join Pakistan, was involved in too many other matters relating to the process of partition to pay strict attention to what was happening in Jammu Province. It appears that the appeal of the Azad Kashmir agents for arms and munitions from the tribal groups on the North-west Frontier area was almost unknown in New Delhi. It was not until the evening of October 24, 1947, that the first intelligence of the tribal movements into Kashmir Province reached both Srinagar and New Delhi.²⁰

The events of the next three days unfolded with lightning speed. Early on October 24, after attending a meeting of the Indian Defense Council, the Secretary of the Indian States Council, V.P. Menon, flew to Srinagar. The Maharajah and his government were in a state of panic over the news of the Pathan invasion up the Jhelam River road. Menon advised the Maharajah and his family to evacuate over the Banihal Pass road to the winter capital in Jammu City in eastern Jammu.

The Maharajah appealed for Indian armed forces to help his inadequate and too thinly spread state forces to repel the tribal invasion. Menon had been instructed to agree to such an arrangement only after receiving from the Maharajah a signed instrument of the accession of Jammu and Kashmir State to India. When this was accomplished the following day, the 26th, the Indian Defense Council approved orders to Gen. Sir Roy Bucher, British Commander in Chief of the Indian Army, to airlift units of the Regular Indian Army into Srinagar. Early on the morning of October 27, after a strenuous night in which every commercial airliner in Delhi and nearby airfields was commandeered, 330 men of the First Sikh Battalion of the Indian Army reached Srinagar and only just managed to hold the airfield against the invading tribesmen.

The Indian airlift continued, supplemented by transport of troops, supplies, and munitions by the Banihal Pass road; by the end of November, nearly a whole division of the Regular Indian Army was in action against the insurgents. This division was commanded by Brig. L. P. Sen until the end of November, and after that by Maj. Gen. Kalwant Singh. Divisional headquarters were set up in Srinagar.²¹

After October 27, 1947, counterinsurgency in Jammu and Kashmir State was under the control of, and wholly managed by, the Indian government. From this time on, the indigenous forces were forced into a subsidiary role, the Maharajah's government acting under the direct guidance of representatives of the Indian government in New Delhi. Indian troops trained the Jammu and Kashmir State police to maintain internal security. By calling in Indian troops, the ruler of Jammu and Kashmir State had acknowledged his total inability to organize an effective force against the Azad Kashmir insurgents and the Pathan tribesmen.

The Indian forces had one advantage, in that the area of the insurgency was soon drastically reduced. Behind the fighting front in Jammu Province, counterinsurgency was made relatively

can, because virtually no Muslims remained in that part of the state and the remainder of Hindu and Sikh inhabitants fully supported the Indian cause.

Political Developments in Kashmir

In Kashmir Province, the Muslims who could not or did not flee to Pakistan proved extremely docile. In October 1947, the Maharajah asked Sheikh Abdullah to form an emergency government for the state. In effect, this meant Kashmir Province only, since in outlying areas and eastern Jammu Province, the administration was controlled either by the Indian government or by Indian-approved officers of the Maharajah's government.²² Sheikh Abdullah and his associates did everything possible to strengthen their political organization, the All-Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. Any opposition to this effort or to increased taxation was ruthlessly suppressed and vocal opponents were quickly jailed. Although many plans for improvements in the lot of the people were announced, virtually no progress was made toward this end until some time after the end of the fighting.

Conventionalization of Conflict

The armed conflict in Jammu and Kashmir State now assumed some of the character of conventional warfare between two nations, although neither India nor Pakistan wanted to risk a direct confrontation and full-scale war. Nonetheless, the Indian government had no intention of permitting this large state to accede to Pakistan, its rival on the subcontinent. The Indian Army was therefore directly involved in the attempt to wipe out the insurgency of the Azad Kashmir forces, to repel the tribal intervention, and to quell rebellion among the Muslims in Jammu Province.

It is fair to say that neither the Indian government nor the Indian Army regarded the fighting in Jammu and Kashmir as counterinsurgency. Rather, they regarded it as justifiable defense of Indian territory against the unjustified aggression of Pakistan. This was the position taken consistently by Indian government representatives in the United Nations Security Council.²³ Nevertheless, it is possible to evaluate the Indian actions in Jammu and Kashmir in terms of counterinsurgency, in the modern meaning of the word.

Indians Take Military and Diplomatic Offensive

On November 8, 1947, Indian Army forces captured Baramula, the entry point to the Valley of Kashmir along the Jhelum River road from western Jammu. The town and surrounding area had been thoroughly sacked and burned by the invading Pathans and it was reported by Indian sources that only 1,000 of the 14,000 inhabitants of the district were left alive. Probably around 2,000 were killed in the fighting and most of the unaccounted-for remainder became refugees in western Jammu and Pakistan. On November 11, the Indian Army captured Uri, the key center on

the southern slopes of the Pir Panjal range, from which the Jhelum Valley road debouches into western Jammu Province. Having cleared the Kashmir Valley of tribal invaders, the Indian Army dug in for the winter. For several weeks, negotiations on the whole Kashmir problem were carried on by the Indian and Pakistan governments, and on December 31, the Indian government submitted the Kashmir question to the United Nations Security Council.²⁴

For the winter months, from mid-November 1947 until the end of March 1948, the Banihal Pass road was closed by snow a large part of the time, but the Indian Army still managed to move additional troops into Kashmir, along with supplies for a spring offensive. In Jammu Province, the Indian government made strenuous efforts to build east-to-west roads and tracks to support its growing forces fighting in Mirpur. Supplies were airlifted into the besieged city of Poonch. Eastern Jammu Province beyond the Chenab River was cleared of all Azad Kashmir forces, and the lengthening road supply line from the Indian railhead at Pathankot was made as secure as possible from raiders.

Negotiations at the United Nations, which had meanwhile begun, did not alleviate the situation, as the snows began to thaw, the Indian Army prepared for a general spring offensive. A second full Indian Army division was moved into the Vale, and Indian forces in Jammu were also gradually built up to two full divisions.

In May 1948, the Indian Army began a three-pronged offensive. First, Indian forces in Jammu Province pushed westward against strong opposition from the Azad Kashmir insurgents, who were now well organized and fairly well supplied. The long Indian supply line made this movement slow. The second prong of the offensive was a push along the Jhelum River road from Uri, an attempt to break out of the mountains and relieve the siege of Poonch. Here, the Indian Army had more success and almost reached Poonch City. Stiff opposition from the Azad Kashmir forces and from tribesmen now organized by Pakistan Army officers brought the Indian forces to a halt short of their objectives. The third prong of the offensive was toward Tithwal, northwest of Uri along the Kishenganga River. The capture of Tithwal put another Indian force in a position to debouch into the Muzaffargarh District and threatened the main supply base of the Azad Kashmir and tribal forces.

India Makes Cautious Advance to Poonch City

In June and July 1948, the Azad Kashmir forces, with staff assistance from Pakistan Army officers, mounted a counteroffensive in Jammu. At the same time, the Gilgit Scouts, reinforced by one or more units of the Pakistan Frontier Force, attempted a diversionary offensive over the Zojila Pass (11,578 ft.). The main trade route linking Kashmir, Ladakh, and China follows the track over this pass, the lowest in the northern tier of ranges surrounding the Vale of Kashmir. The Indian Army, however, had greatly improved its intelligence and counterintelligence network in Kashmir Province and received warning of this movement. To counter it, the

Indians moved a company of light tanks to the top of the Zojila Pass by dismantling the turrets and reassembling the tanks on top of the pass only shortly before they went into action. This successful counterattack enabled Indian Army units to push on into parts of Baltistan and to Leh, the capital of Ladakh, thus securing these districts of Jammu and Kashmir State for India.²⁴

Meantime, the Indian Army staff was confronted with a delicate problem occasioned by the Indian advance in western Jammu and control of the strategic points of Uri and Tithwal. In May and June 1948, Indian Army intelligence had begun to report that units of the Regular Pakistan Army had crossed the borders of Jammu. Participation of one or more units of the Frontier Scouts—a Regular Pakistan Army force—in the fighting for the Zojila Pass had been noted. There was some hesitancy, therefore, on the part of the Indian government to order a general advance by the Indian Army. They feared direct military confrontation with the Pakistan Army which would have brought war between the two nations. Consequently, in August and September, fighting continued as probing actions by both sides, and the Indian Army finally made a successful thrust toward Poonch and relieved the ten-month siege in October.

Pakistan Tries Bold Gamble

By this time, the Pakistan government had officially acknowledged to the U.N. Commission that regular battalions, making up a full division, had crossed the border in western Jammu Province. The Pakistanis insisted that this move was purely defensive, designed to stiffen the determination of the Azad Kashmir insurgents; they pointed out also that the divisional headquarters were positioned on the Pakistan side of the Jammu border.²⁵

The capture of Poonch City by the Indian Army, however, caused the Pakistani government and general staff to reevaluate its position and that of the Azad Kashmir insurgent forces. They were now facing over four Indian Army divisions, and any further offensive could well destroy or at least break up the Azad Kashmir forces and the Azad Kashmir "government," giving India practical control of most of western Jammu Province, as well as Kashmir Province.

The Pakistanis decided on a bold, if still controversial, move. Pulling their forces out of the Punjab and leaving the city of Lahore virtually undefended, they put large numbers of troops at a point just west of Jammu City within easy distance of the improved road to Poonch. There they remained through December, poised for an attack which could have trapped two Indian divisions. It was never made, presumably because the Pakistanis feared the Indians would retaliate by driving against the city of Lahore. The Pakistanis scarcely cared to gamble the great capital of the Punjab for a bit more of Jammu Province. And, of course, an Indian attack on Lahore would have meant unrestricted warfare.²⁶

Military Impasse Leads to Cease-Fire

The Indian Army, during the last six months of the hostilities, faced a morale problem in its own ranks. The Sikh battalions originally committed to the Kashmir hostilities fought

enthusiastically, believing themselves to be avenging Muslim attacks on Sikhs during the communal strife of the preceding year. To bring their forces up to four divisions in strength, however, the Indian government had to use an increasing number of units with personnel from the south and west of India. These troops had not experienced communal attacks on their families or villages. Furthermore, having only recently served in a war with the soldiers and officers who were now in the Pakistan Army and the Azad Kashmir forces, they had little stomach for fighting former comrades. Vigorous propaganda supporting the Indian cause and justifying Indian occupation of Jammu and Kashmir was mounted by the Indian Army to keep up morale. Needless to say, it was only partly successful.

Thus the military situation in December 1948 was a major impetus to acceptance by both India and Pakistan of the United Nations proposal to end the conflict. In the United Nations, Great Britain and the United States had made continuous efforts to get both India and Pakistan to accept mediation of the whole dispute and stop the hostilities. On January 15, 1948, the U.N. Security Council, with the U.S.S.R. and the Ukraine abstaining, had passed a unanimous resolution urging negotiations and an armistice. Debate and negotiations continued. On April 21, both India and Pakistan accepted a Security Council resolution establishing a U.N. Commission, which was to proceed to the subcontinent to work out means for an end to hostilities and to propose some solution of the dispute. In July and most of August, the Commission was in India, Pakistan, and Jammu and Kashmir State, conducting its investigations. On August 13, the Security Council adopted the Commission's recommendation for a cease-fire, to be supervised by U.N. military observers, and for an eventual plebiscite in the state.

Clarifications demanded by both the Indian and Pakistan governments delayed acceptance until late December 1948. The final cease-fire date was arranged by an exchange of communications between Gen. Sir Roy Bucher, Commander in Chief of the Indian Army, and Gen. Sir Douglas Gracey, Commander in Chief of the Pakistan Army. At one minute after midnight on January 1, 1949, the cease-fire took effect.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

The agreement for the cease-fire in Jammu and Kashmir State virtually froze the fighting front on January 1, 1949. It left India in control of all of Kashmir Province except some small mountainous areas in the west; all of Ladakh and part of Baltistan, the area east and south of the main passes into the Kashmir Valley; eastern Jammu Province up to the Chenab River and a small bit of west Jammu. Poonch City and the mountainous fringes of Mirpur and Poonch Districts on the southern slopes of the Pir Panjal range. Pakistan was left in effective control of the major part of the Baltistan Frontier Districts adjoining the Gilgit areas, all of the Gilgit Frontier Districts, western Jammu Province, including most of Mirpur and Poonch

Districts, and virtually all of the Muzaffarabad District, the major base of the Azad Kashmir insurgents.²⁸

After January 1, 1949, the cease-fire line was patrolled by U.N. Military Observation Teams. It was reliably reported that India maintained a full division in Jammu Province. Its forces in Kashmir Province were increased to three full divisions or more, after the Red Chinese occupation of some 12,000 square miles of Ladakh in 1958-59 and the border war with Communist China in 1961-62.

In Gilgit and the very high, mountainous parts of Baltistan west of the cease-fire line, Pakistan maintained strengthened units of the Gilgit Scouts and the Pakistan Frontier Force. In the Pakistan-held parts of western Jammu Province, the strengthened Azad Kashmir forces held the cease-fire line, particularly the roads through the Jhelum Valley and the Kashenganga Valley to Uri and Tithwal respectively. The Azad Kashmir forces were trained and advised by regular Pakistan Army units and received logistic support from Pakistan.²⁹

Political Status of Jammu and Kashmir

Just as there was a military stalemate between the opposing armed forces, so the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir also resulted in a political impasse.

After the end of hostilities, the Indian government still considered Jammu and Kashmir an integral part of the Indian Union, but in fact it controlled only a portion of the state's area. In 1949, Maharajah Sir Hari Singh left Jammu City for Bombay, not actually deposed but permanently in exile, leaving his son Karen Singh in charge. The Indian government kept a tight rein on the administration of the state and the Kashmiris were never allowed the political freedom enjoyed by other parts of the Indian Union. Sheikh Abdullah remained in jail a good part of the next 15 years. Suspected of separatist tendencies at the least, but the only leader with a truly mass following in Kashmir, he was finally restored to freedom and power in mid-1964.

On the other side of the cease-fire line, the Gilgit Districts were administered directly by the Pakistan government, and the areas of western Jammu province were under the administration of the Azad Kashmir "government." This government was admittedly a creature of Pakistan, but that country stopped short of formal recognition or incorporation of the Azad Kashmir area, since such a step would have been an admission of the permanency of the accession of eastern Jammu and Kashmir to India. The Pakistan government continued to assist the Azad Kashmir government and to treat it actually, but not legally, as a part of Pakistan. Pakistan maintains the theory that the Azad Kashmir regime is the only rightful government of the whole state.

Casualties and Economic Costs

Eighteen months of hostilities also produced disruption of trade and society, not only in Jammu and Kashmir State, but also in India and Pakistan. The tribesmen who invaded the Vale of

Kashmir in 1947 and fought valiantly in Jammu in 1948 were reliably reported to have suffered more than 5,000 casualties. Losses in the Indian Army and the Jammu and Kashmir State forces were considerably less, somewhere in the neighborhood of 2,000. Not unnaturally, the civilian population suffered the most. Although statistics are not wholly accurate, a conservative estimate would place killed and wounded within Jammu and Kashmir at somewhere around 10,000 as a direct result of the hostilities. More important, perhaps, was the fact that Pakistan was forced to absorb almost 300,000 refugees from the state, and India was forced to absorb another 200,000. These numbers represented an additional burden on the resources of both India and Pakistan, beyond the millions of refugees involved in the communal strife of 1947.³⁰

The virtual partition of Jammu and Kashmir State by the cease-fire agreement produced a complete change in trade patterns and economic relations. There were certain positive economic results. The Indian government began construction of a tunnel on the Banihal Pass road and its completion gave the Vale of Kashmir an all-weather route to India. A variety of road construction programs, mostly for military purposes, as well as hydroelectric schemes, village development, and increased agricultural development characterized the efforts of the Indian government to win support from the Muslim and other inhabitants of the Indian-held part of Jammu and Kashmir. In both the Gilgit Frontier Districts and in western Jammu Province, the Pakistan government has made considerable progress at schemes of economic development, improvement of roads and communication, and general welfare projects. The two governments obviously hope to win support for their respective positions from both the local inhabitants and observers from other nations.³¹

Cease-Fire Leaves Problem as a Threat to Peace

As has been the case with a divided Korea, the years since the cease-fire have not brought much hope of a peaceful settlement. A more conciliatory Indian attitude, especially after the death of Nehru, and an apparent willingness on the part of President Ayub Khan of Pakistan to begin new negotiations gave hope in 1964 of a settlement. But there has been little abatement of the intense emotionalism and antagonism engendered by this dispute among the leaders, the press, and the public in both countries. The 18 months of hostilities in Jammu and Kashmir State had consequences which might have been repaired and eventually overcome if a final political and territorial settlement of the dispute had been agreed to within a reasonable period of time.

In retrospect it is possible to identify four major consequences of the insurgency and counterinsurgency in Jammu and Kashmir State and of the failure to arrive at a final political-territorial settlement of the dispute.

First, basic communal differences have been so perpetuated and intensified by the Kashmir dispute that each year finds any reasonable final settlement harder to effect.

Second, the maintenance of large armed forces along the cease-fire line and along their common borders by both governments has drained resources which might have been put to more productive use. India's best troops, for example, were on the northwest boundary facing Pakistan when the Chinese Communists easily invaded India's northeast frontier in 1962.

Third, cooperation between India and Pakistan--economic, political or military--has been limited by the continued existence of the Kashmir dispute, even in the face of the obvious dangers of Communist aggression. In fact, the dispute has drawn both governments closer to the vortex of the cold war and the Sino-Soviet contest, since the U.S.S.R. has supported India and the Chinese Communists have tended to support Pakistan in the Kashmir controversy.

Fourth and finally, this unsettled dispute, leaving the armies of both governments facing each other, ready for war, provides a highly dangerous and potentially explosive situation in Asia. A miscalculation or another outbreak of insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir could easily set India and Pakistan to war with each other,* to their own detriment, to the detriment of the free world, and possibly to the great benefit of the Communist bloc.

* In the fall of 1965, hostilities broke out anew between Indian and Pakistani forces in Jammu and Kashmir State and the Punjab region. A military stalemate developed and international pressure brought the two nations to accept a new cease-fire and to pull back their forces to their former positions.

NOTES

- ¹Michael Brecher, The Struggle for Kashmir (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 4.
- ²Ibid., ch. V.
- ³Robert L. Crane (ed.), Area Handbook on Jammu and Kashmir State (HRAF Series) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956), chs. 3 and 4.
- ⁴For a more detailed history, see Brecher, Struggle; Crane, Area Handbook.
- ⁵Brecher, Struggle, p. 7.
- ⁶Quoted in Brecher, Struggle, p. 9.
- ⁷For details of this period, see Brecher, Struggle; Crane, Area Handbook, and V. P. Menon, The Integration of the Indian States (New York: Macmillan, 1956), ch. 20.
- ⁸See Ian Stephens, Pakistan (London: Ernest Benn, 1963).
- ⁹See Brecher, Struggle; and Crane, Area Handbook.
- ¹⁰Josef Korbel, Danger in Kashmir (Princeton: University Press, 1954), pp. 46ff.
- ¹¹Personal notes and recollections of the author who was in Lahore in mid-June, 1947.
- ¹²See Christopher Birdwood, Lord Bromhead, Two Nations and Kashmir (London: Robert Hale, 1956), chs. 3 and 4.
- ¹³Ibid., ch. 3.
- ¹⁴Stephens, Pakistan, p. 182.
- ¹⁵Birdwood, Two Nations, ch. 4; Stephens, Pakistan, ch. 10; James W. Spain, The Pathan Borderland (The Hague: Morton and Co., 1963), pp. 204ff.
- ¹⁶Ibid.
- ¹⁷For a good description of the Gilgit insurgency see Stephens, Pakistan, ch. 15; also Birdwood, Two Nations, ch. 5; Menon, Integration, ch. 20.
- ¹⁸Birdwood, Two Nations, ch. 6, and Korbel, Danger, chs. 16 and 17.
- ¹⁹Birdwood, Two Nations, ch. 3.
- ²⁰Ibid., chs. 3, 4, and 5; Jyoti Bhursan Das Gupta, Indo-Pakistan Relations: 1947-1955 (Amsterdam: Djambatan, 1958), chs. 3 and 4; Menon, Integration, ch. 20; Stephens, Pakistan, chs. 11, 12, and 25.
- ²¹Ibid.
- ²²See Korbel, Danger, chs. 5 and 6.
- ²³See particularly Das Gupta, Relations, chs. 3 and 4, and Korbel, Danger, chs. 4 through 7.
- ²⁴Ibid.
- ²⁵Stephens, Pakistan, ch. 15.
- ²⁶Ibid.; Korbel, Danger, chs. 5 and 6.

²⁷Stephens, Pakistan, ch. 15.

²⁸See maps in Birdwood, Two Nations; Das Gupta, Relations; Korbel, Danger; Stephens, Pakistan.

²⁹Crane, Area Handbook; Korbel, Danger, chs. 6 and 7; Stephens, Pakistan, chs. 16 and 17.

³⁰Das Gupta, Relations, chs. 5, 6, and 7; Korbel, Danger, ch. 8; Stephens, Pakistan, chs. 16 and 17.

³¹Ibid.

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Chapter Twelve

**SOUTH VIET-NAM
1956 to November 1963**

by Bernard B. Fall



REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM (1956-1963)

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In a campaign that became a test area for a wide range of counterinsurgency techniques, the South Vietnamese government of President Ngo Dinh Diem — with the ever-increasing involvement of the United States — waged an intensive fight to avoid a Communist takeover.

BACKGROUND

When this paper was written in mid-1965, the situation in South Viet-Nam was as yet unresolved, but the conflict appeared to have come to a turning point. The Vietnamese Communist, or Viet Cong, insurgency, supported by the North, seemed to be gaining ground and consolidating its position in South Viet-Nam. South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem's fight against the Viet Cong had clearly not succeeded; the President himself had been overthrown and killed; and his successors, despite massive injections of U.S. aid, were barely holding their own. Nonetheless, there still existed a variety of choices for the counterinsurgents, ranging from withdrawal to escalation. The future, of course, remains unknown, but it may well be determined by President Diem's management of the first phase of the counterinsurgency. This paper focuses upon that period, which lasted until the President's downfall and death on November 2, 1963.

Shaped like an elongated "S" and extending along the coast of the Indochinese Peninsula for more than a thousand miles from South China to the Gulf of Siam, Viet-Nam has been divided since 1954 at the 17th parallel into a northern Communist-held zone and a southern non-Communist zone. The Republic of Viet-Nam (RVN), as South Viet-Nam is officially termed, covers about 66,000 square miles, or an area slightly smaller than the state of Missouri. Its boundaries are not naturally delineated, except by the Ben-Hai River in the north, but run through dense jungles and marshes. As a result, border incidents and crossing errors have been an everyday occurrence, even in peacetime.

From the 17th parallel in the north to its southern tip on the Camau Peninsula, South Viet-Nam may be divided into four broad geographic areas: the small delta lowlands along the central Vietnamese seacoast; the Southern Mountain Plateau, known to the French as the Plateaux Montagnards du Sud (PMS) and generally referred to by Americans as the Highlands, the Red Soil forest zone that encircles the capital city of Saigon to the north and east; and, finally, in the

south, the Mekong Delta, with its 2,400 miles of natural and artificial waterways, its mangrove swamps, and its flooded rice paddies. In turn, the small central deltas are each surrounded by jungle-covered mountains; the Highlands area has zones of dense forest interspersed with areas of tall elephant grass; the Red Soil areas are composed in large part of cultivated forests with their mile-long rows of rubber trees; and the 26,000-square-mile Mekong Delta contains the Delta proper, the Plain of Reeds swamp on the Cambodian-South Vietnamese border, and the U-Minh swamp in the Camau Peninsula. About 75 percent of South Viet-Nam is covered with brush and jungle, of which almost half is true rain forest.

The climate is tropical throughout, with temperatures ranging from an average in the low 60's in the Highlands to the high 90's in the Delta, and with high humidity, except for the winter months. Located in the monsoon belt, South Viet-Nam has a rainy summer season with many typhoon-like storms over much of its area.

The People of South Viet-Nam

The population of the RVN is very unevenly distributed. In the Highlands, it averages less than 15 persons to the square mile, whereas in the Mekong Delta area it averages 525 per square mile, and in certain areas of the Province of Quang-Nam, it reaches a fantastic 2,000 or more to the square mile. There has been no complete census since 1936, the flux and reflux of refugees and guerrillas making most statistics little more than educated guesses. For example, in 1954-55 about 860,000 North Vietnamese moved south, while about 90,000 South Vietnamese moved north. The 1959 partial census in South Viet-Nam showed a population of less than 14 million. Five years later, a common guess of the total number of South Vietnamese was about 14.6 million people, of whom all but about 2.2 million lived in some 14,000 rural villages and settlements. A large proportion of South Viet-Nam's population—some say over 40 percent—was very young, under 15 years of age.

The original inhabitants of the country were of proto-Malay stock with an admixture of Mon-Khmer, particularly in the south. Then, late in the 15th century, some Vietnamese, a Mongoloid people, penetrated south of the 17th parallel. They limited their colonization to the coastal lowlands, however, and the non-Vietnamese aborigines slowly withdrew into the Highlands. These latter people, later known collectively as montagnards, included perhaps 30 to 35 ethno-linguistic groups, of which the Rhadé, Jarai, Bahnar, and Sedang were the principal ones. The montagnards were never integrated with the Vietnamese and their relationship was one of infrequent contact and considerable animosity. The Vietnamese, in fact, called the mountain people moi, meaning savage.¹

Eventually the Vietnamese extended their penetration. The Mekong Delta, now the center of South Vietnamese population, was occupied by the Vietnamese late in the 17th century. Saigon, the former Cambodian city of Prey-Khor, became Vietnamese in 1698, and the Camau Peninsula,

in 1757. In the Camau Peninsula and southern part of the Delta there were, even in the 1960's, perhaps as many as 600,000 Cambodians. The lowlands, and particularly the urban centers, such as Cholon, twin city of Saigon, are the home of the million Chinese who have settled down in the RVN. Thus, the ethnic picture of the RVN may be summed up approximately as follows:

Vietnamese	12,200,000
Chinese	1,000,000
Cambodians (Khmer)	600,000
Montagnards	700,000
Others*	100,000

Religious Diversity and Animosity

Since the 17th century, Viet-Nam has had a history of violent religious strife between the country's Buddhist majority and the sizable and influential Roman Catholic minority. There have been numerous instances of religious persecution and large-scale massacres by both sides.²

The Buddhist majority is by no means monolithic. Fourteen different branches of Buddhism totaling perhaps five million members are said to coexist in South Viet-Nam, excluding Confucianists and ancestor worshipers.³ A number of sects loosely linked with Buddhism have also played an important role in South Viet-Nam. The Cao Dai, for example, is a syncretic faith composed of elements of Buddhism, Taoism, spiritualism, Confucianism, and Christianity, particularly Catholicism. The Hoa Hao is a sect combining a variant of "Greater Vehicle" Buddhism with faith healing. Estimates have placed Cao Dai membership at 2.5 million persons; the Hoa Hao, at 2 million.

The precise definition of what constituted a Buddhist in South Viet-Nam was probably irrelevant to the major problem which arose when religion later came prominently into the insurgent-counterinsurgent picture. More important was the number of persons who would rally to Buddhism if they felt it to be threatened, whether or not they were generally practicing Buddhists. It might be expected that most Vietnamese, other than those who were Roman Catholic, would align themselves with Buddhism under certain conditions. This observation would appear to be substantiated by a source which stated that, in 1954, there were about 20 million nominal Buddhists out of a total population of about 30 million persons in all of Viet-Nam, both North and South.⁴

*Cham-Malays, Indians, Pakistanis, Eurasians, Europeans, including several thousand French, etc.

A Predominantly Agricultural Economy

With agricultural production that permitted a generally adequate diet, South Viet-Nam ranked among the most prosperous Asian countries. The Mekong Delta was the principal "rice bowl," although rice was grown in all lowland areas, in this respect South Viet-Nam was favored over the North. Normally, the country produced about 75,000 tons of raw rubber per year and around 4 to 5 million tons of rice, of which about a quarter was surplus and exportable. The full impact of the Communist insurgency on the economy after 1956 cannot be evaluated precisely, especially since the guerrillas found it to their advantage to allow the export of certain commodities so long as they were able to collect "taxes."⁵ It was reported by U.S. government sources that food production in South Viet-Nam rose 20 percent from the 1956 figure by 1960, 30 percent by 1963.⁶

Industrialization was slow, though many promising projects were underway or planned by 1961. In 1962, there were only 200,000 industrial jobs, including government workers and various service employees. The total number of nonagricultural jobs was estimated at between 750,000 and 1,000,000. Unemployment was widespread and there was little opportunity other than for the few. Though statistics might be misleading, the 1960 per capita personal income was \$110 in the South, compared with \$70 in the North.⁷ The 1963 gross national product for South Viet-Nam was reckoned at \$1.8 billion, or at \$2.6 billion if nonmonetary incomes and services were included. Compared with other Southeast Asian countries, the South Vietnamese economy was more affluent than the Indonesian, Cambodian, Laotian, and North Vietnamese, but less affluent than the Malaysian or Japanese economies.

French Rule Ended by Viet Minh Insurgency

Before 1954, South Viet-Nam was politically a part of French Indochina. In 1858, the French had come to the Saigon area of Cochín-China (as southern Viet-Nam was then known); and in the 1890's, the entire territory of Viet-Nam, Cambodia, and Laos was incorporated into France's colonial empire as Indochina. World War II challenged French authority in Indochina, with the Japanese occupying the area and eventually installing a Vietnamese puppet government under the Emperor Bao Dai at the ancient capital of Hué. After the war, French authorities returned but were confronted with an indigenous Communist regime, set up in the wake of the Japanese surrender in August 1945. The result was eight years of guerrilla warfare between the Communist Viet Minh and the French.* During this period, in 1949, the French recognized the independence of a unified Viet-Nam as an associated state within the French Union, with the Emperor Bao Dai as its chief of state.

*See ch. 9, "Indochina (1946-1954)."

The Geneva Conference of May-July 1954 ended French authority in Indochina and brought temporary peace to the area. It partitioned Viet-Nam at the 17th parallel into Communist and non-Communist zones, pending a general election to reunify the country. The North was organized as a Communist-administered zone, officially termed the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam (DRV), with its capital at Hanoi. A non-Communist government of Viet-Nam was recognized in the area south of the 17th parallel, with its capital at Saigon. Signed by France and the Viet Minh as the principal antagonists, along with Cambodia, Laos, Communist China, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union, the Geneva accords of July 20, 1954, were not signed by representatives of South Viet-Nam or by the United States. The United States immediately declared its intention, however, not to disturb the Geneva agreements, while viewing with grave concern any renewed aggression in violation of the agreements.⁸

Diem Takes Over New Government and Its Problems

In June 1954, Bao Dai offered the post of prime minister of South Viet-Nam to Ngo Dinh Diem, a highly respected nationalistic figure. When Diem arrived in Saigon in 1954, he inherited a government in shambles. The country was physically devastated. The French were pulling out, while refugees were streaming down from the North. The Viet Minh, legally taking over in the North, remained illegally in control of many areas of the South.

In Saigon, the Binh Xuyen gang was in firm control, not only of many legitimate businesses, but of gambling, brothels, and vice in general. Its leader, Le Van Vien (popularly called Bay Vien), had worked in turn with and for the Japanese, the Viet Minh, the French, and Bao Dai. Under Bao Dai, Bay Vien had become a colonel in the Vietnamese National Army and was reported to have bought concessions from the police in Saigon for 40 million piasters.

The religious sects were also unwilling to come to terms with Diem. The Cao Dai was in possession of an army of between 15,000 and 25,000 troops, with its headquarters at Tay Ninh, about 60 miles from Saigon. Previously supported by the Japanese during World War II and later by the French, the Cao Dai posed a firm threat to the new Diem government. The Hoa Hao sect had flourished under a famous faith healer and religious leader, Huynh Phu So, who, after a brief collaboration with the Viet Minh, had been murdered by them in April 1947. After this, the Hoa Hao had broken up into feudal "baronies," with its armies maintained by the French. Thus in 1954, Binh Xuyen commandos controlled Saigon, Cao Dai troops roamed the country west of Saigon, and Hoa Hao armies were strong in the southern delta. To none of these groups was the strong-willed, intransigent, and Catholic Diem an acceptable replacement for the more politic French.

Bravely, and with a certain brilliance, Diem faced his problems. Aided by the Americans and French, he succeeded in moving almost a million refugees from the North and ultimately in resettling them, mainly along the roads leading to Saigon. In the spring of 1955—with a mixture of political daring, bribery, double dealing, and actual fighting—Diem challenged both the

Binh Xuyen and the sects. In this process, Diem fell out of favor both with the French and with Bao Dai, who was living in France and who now ordered him to come to Paris. Supported by the Americans, Diem refused to leave the country in this time of peril and split openly with the French. Resisting Bao Dai's demand that he relinquish control of the Army, Diem instead rallied the support of strong army elements and managed to destroy the military power of both the Binh Xuyen and the sects.

The 1955 Election: A Republic and a President

Diem now moved to confirm his victory, holding an election on October 23, 1955, in which the South Vietnamese were offered a choice between Bao Dai and himself. The result was, as expected, an overwhelming victory: South Viet-Nam became a republic; Diem its president.

Despite the continuance of many problems, the situation did not appear hopeless in 1955. In fact, Diem's government enjoyed a good deal of popularity in 1955-56, both abroad in the West and at home among the people. To the highly factional South Vietnamese—fragmented ethnically between montagnard and lowlander, religiously between the Buddhist-oriented and the non-Buddhist, culturally between indigenous southerner and refugee northerner, and politically among an infinity of personal cliques—President Diem appeared the only unifying figure, a symbol of non-Communist Vietnamese nationalism. By breaking the power of the feudal warlords and private armies of the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai sects, the government had provided a modicum of security to the villagers in the countryside. The refugees from the North, many of them Catholics, could be counted on to support the government in any crisis. And American aid, channeled through the government, was beginning to make itself felt in some areas.

U.S. Policy Toward South Viet-Nam

American support was predicated on the assumption that the government of President Diem represented the best available in South Viet-Nam at that time. Viewing Indochina as one of several major theaters in the cold war, the United States had begun providing economic, technical, and military assistance to the French as early as 1950. In the spring of 1954, when the Franco-Viet Minh conflict was going badly for the French, President Eisenhower gave official expression to an idea which was to become a cornerstone of U.S. policy in Viet-Nam, observing in a press conference on April 7 that the loss of Indochina, like a "falling domino," might lead ultimately to the loss of all Southeast Asia.⁹ After the Geneva cease-fire, the Saigon government fell heir to the legacy of American material assistance which had previously been extended to the French. In October 1954, President Eisenhower, in a letter to then Prime Minister Diem, stated that "The purpose of this offer [of U.S. aid] is to assist the Government of Viet-Nam in developing and maintaining a strong, viable state, capable of resisting attempted subversion or aggression through military means."¹⁰

Two Major Problems: Land Reform and Public Administration

There was hope, furthermore, in the fact that President Diem set out to cope with South Viet-Nam's major economic problem, which derived from the plantation system that had long prevailed, particularly in the Mekong Delta region. In 1955, some 6,300 Vietnamese land-owners owned 2,500,000 acres, while 183,000 other owners held only 828,000 acres—and about 1,500,000 farmers owned little or no land. But at best, land reform was slow and cumbersome.¹¹ The government's agricultural program, which limited each landlord to some 245 acres and reduced rents from about 50 percent of the crop yield to 15 to 25 percent, was conservative by other Asian land reform standards.¹² Indeed, in those parts of the Delta where the Communists before 1954 had driven the landlords and tax collectors out of the countryside and turned the land over to peasants rent-free, the government's return and its land reform program actually restored land to the landlords and brought back the tax collector—and was thus intensely unpopular. At the same time, many South Vietnamese farmers saw and objected strongly to the government's policy of providing land for refugees from the North. Also, despite several efforts by the government to bring cheap agricultural credit to farmers, rural indebtedness to the landlords remained high. As a result, Communist propaganda aimed at the small farmer and landless peasant found willing listeners.

The new regime was further weakened by its lack of public administrators. This was due in part to South Viet-Nam's colonial heritage: French officials had often filled even comparatively minor administrative posts in Indochina and particularly in that part which became South Viet-Nam. In order to consolidate his power, Diem had rapidly purged in 1954-55 both the French and some French-trained Vietnamese, replacing them with younger and less well-trained Vietnamese officials. Promotions were generally handled on a basis of personal favor. An American public administration training mission reported, furthermore, that it found its work limited, since the government "displayed no active interest in improving personnel administration...largely because political considerations prevailed over technical requirements."¹³ Out-of-favor officials were likely to be sent to remote posts, and in any event to receive little aid from the central government. As a result of both the general lack of trained administrators and the system of personal promotion, outlying provinces were in many cases poorly administered. And it was precisely in these outlying provinces that the Communists would soon place new stresses on the regime.

Diem Refuses to Hold Reunification Elections

The Geneva cease-fire agreement of 1954 had called for general elections to be held in 1956 throughout both North and South Viet-Nam under the supervision of an international control commission¹⁴ and had proposed consultations between the Hanoi and Saigon regimes with a view of bringing about reunification of the country. Since the non-Communist government of South

Viet-Nam had not signed the Geneva accords, President Diem maintained that the RVN was not legally bound by the 1954 agreements.¹⁵ Furthermore, he refused to negotiate with the Communist regime in the North, charging that it did not "place the interests of the Fatherland above those of communism,"¹⁶ and that no free elections could be held in the atmosphere of terror prevailing in North Viet-Nam at the time. It was, in fact, generally thought that the more populous and highly disciplined Communist zone would have carried the day in any general election. In July 1956, the deadline for these elections passed with only minor protests from either Communist China or the Soviet Union—but to Hanoi, the refusal of the Diem regime to submit to a national plebiscite served notice that Viet-Nam would not be peaceably unified under Communist control. When prospects of a peaceful takeover thus evaporated, Vietnamese Communists on both sides of the 17th parallel looked immediately to violent means.

INSURGENCY

It may be said that the Viet Cong insurgency began in 1956, but a Communist underground had existed in South Viet-Nam in one form or another since the 1930's. In 1939, the Russian-German alliance had resulted in the suppression of the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP) in Saigon. World War II, however, gave the Communists a chance to reorganize. At the end of the war they emerged as the Viet Minh, the country's major anti-French force. Although the French were quite successful during 1946-54 in containing the Communist-controlled Viet Minh in southern Viet-Nam, and although many Viet Minh regular units and their dependents left the South after the 1954 cease-fire, competent observers estimated that a hard core of at least 6,000 elite Viet Minh troops stayed behind, with their weapons buried and their key hideouts still intact. These cadres had no difficulty in surviving during the troubled 1954-56 period.

Communist North Fosters Insurgency in the South

Meanwhile, in 1955, the North Vietnamese Communists in Hanoi created the Vietnamese Fatherland Front (Mat-Tran To-Quoc). This organization, with the avowed mission of "struggling for reunification,"¹⁷ began to provide a political platform of somewhat wider appeal to the South Vietnamese than that of the Lao-Dong, the North Vietnamese Communist Party, which had evolved from the Viet Minh. The Lao-Dong, however, remained the chief instrument for all Communist political activity in both North and South Viet-Nam. On September 10, 1960, the Third National Congress of the Lao-Dong passed a resolution describing its two strategic tasks: "First, to carry out the Socialist revolution in North Viet-Nam; second, to liberate South Viet-Nam from the ruling yoke of the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen. . . ."¹⁸ The Lao-Dong had no illusions as to the difficulties of the insurgency in the South, which it frankly admitted would be "a protracted, hard, and complex process of struggle. . . ." The Communists of

South Viet-Nam were advised "to establish a united bloc of workers, peasants, and soldiers. . . . This front must rally all the patriotic classes. . . ."19

Formation of the National Liberation Front

Acting upon this admonition, a group of Communist leaders met on December 20, 1960, probably in the Duong Minh (Zone C) Chau on the Cambodian border of Tay Ninh Province, and hammered out a brief ten-point document which became the charter of a new organization, the Mat-Tran Dan-Toc Giai-Phong Mien-Nam, or National Liberation Front of South Viet-Nam (NLF/SVN). Article Two provided for a separate government for South Viet-Nam and Article Nine advocated reunification at an indefinite later date.²⁰ In keeping with this purportedly "separatist" line, the National Liberation Front even devised a flag for South Viet-Nam, composed of two horizontal bars, sky-blue on top and red on the bottom, with a five-pointed gold star in the center. The formation of the Front was publicly announced by Radio Hanoi on January 29, 1961.

Like its predecessor and parent organization, the Viet Minh, the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front was considered to be controlled by the North Vietnamese Lao-Dong Party. Within the latter party's Central Committee was established a Committee for the Supervision of the South, headed by Le Duc Tho, a senior Communist official. Brig. Gen. (later Maj. Gen.) Nguyen Van Vinh of the (North) Viet-Nam People's Army (VPA) was the military member.²¹ The Committee for the Supervision of the South was later replaced in the Lao-Dong by a Reunification Department responsible for the Viet Cong effort in the South.²²

In an attempt to establish the broadest possible political base in South Viet-Nam, the NLF/SVN pulled into its leadership a carefully selected cross-section of South Vietnamese society. Saigon lawyer and Communist fellow traveler Nguyen Huu Tho became chairman of the NLF Central Committee; its vice chairman was Dr. Phung Van Cung, chairman of the South Vietnamese Peace Committee. Nguyen Huu Tho was generally regarded as a figurehead, and effective power in the Front was believed to be in the hands of its first secretary general, a Saigon journalist and former history professor, Nguyen Van Hieu, a dedicated Communist. Other members included Superior Bonze Son-Vong, a Buddhist priest from South Viet-Nam's Cambodian minority group; Ibih Aléo, a member of the montagnard Rhadé tribe and a former non-commissioned officer in the French Army; and the architect Huynh Tan Phat, secretary general of a defunct political party and later to replace Nguyen Van Hieu as secretary general of the NLF/SVN.²³

Perhaps realizing that this NLF Central Committee was still not fully representative of South Viet-Nam's heterogeneous population and that it did not contain leaders of the caliber required to take over the reins of a future Communist government in Saigon, the Viet Cong made public in April 1962 the names of only 30 members of the 52-member body, asserting that the

remaining seats would be filled by prominent persons who later joined the movement. This silence may also have protected persons under control of the South Vietnamese government. 24

Subsidiary Front Organizations

In order to counter the charge that the NLF was a wholly North Vietnamese Communist organization, a nominally separate People's Revolutionary Party (PRP) was set up in South Viet-Nam late in December 1961. Although it was made to appear that the PRP was only one of several organizations participating in the NLF, the PRP was thought to be headed by the secretary general of the NLF,²⁵ and has often been described as the leading element of the NLF.

After December 20, 1960, a number of supplementary front organizations also made their appearance, with apparently separate hierarchies but an overlapping leadership. "Liberation" movements were sponsored for youths, intellectuals, women, farmers, and other special groups. A Liberation Press Agency began to publish news bulletins and newspapers, a Liberation Radio went on the air, and a Liberation Red Cross Society began to operate.

Viet Cong Military Organization

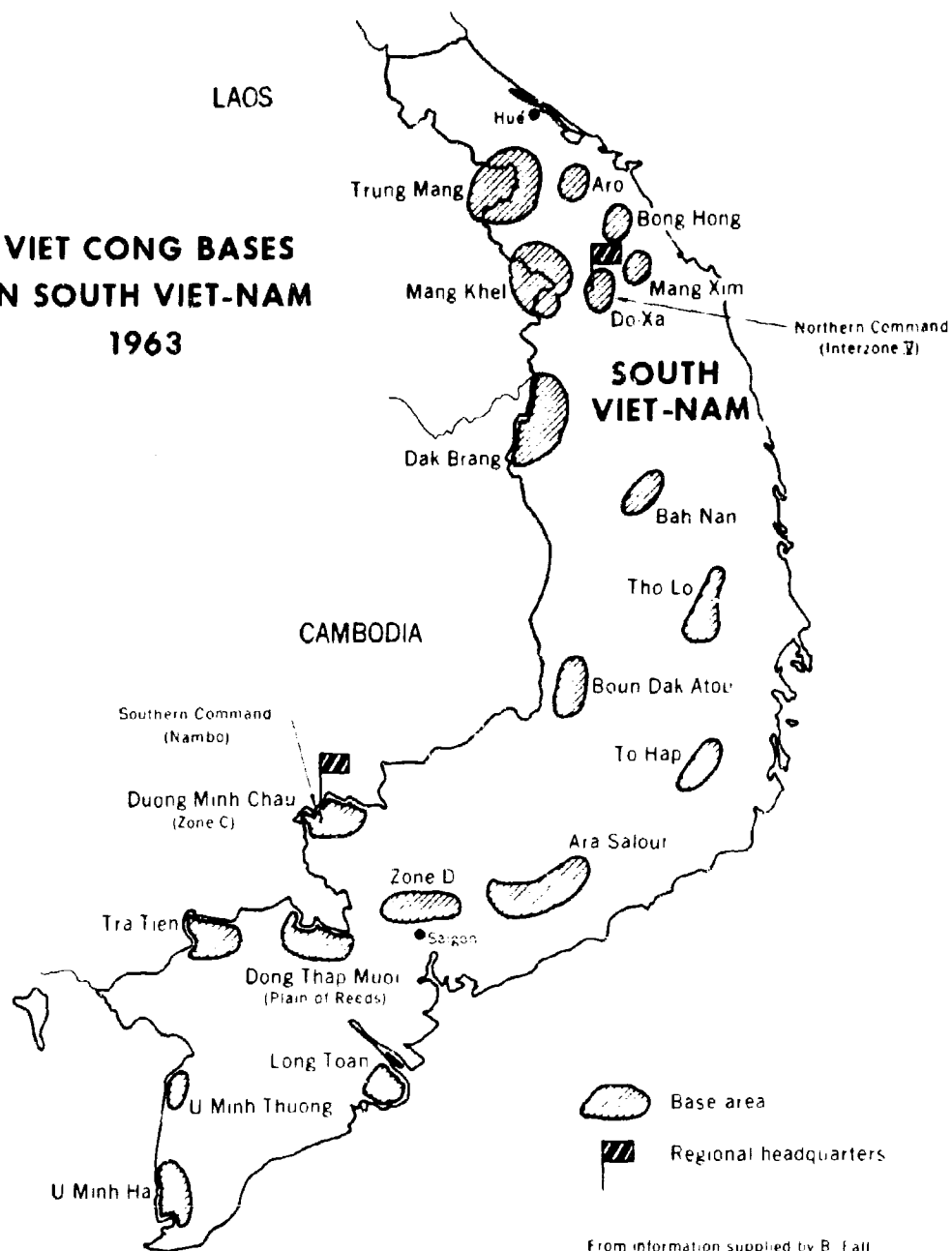
Inside South Viet-Nam, there were two Viet Cong regional military commands: the northern command (Interzone V), which included the Highlands and the central lowland deltas, under Brig. Gen. Nguyen Don (VPA); and the southern command (Nam-Bo), including Camau, the Mekong Delta, and the Saigon area, under a civilian guerrilla leader, Nguyen Huu Xuyen.²⁶ Both were subordinate to party officials—Tran Luong was the chief political commissar for the northern zone; and Muoi Cuc, for the southern zone. In March 1962 the two commands were reorganized and merged into the Central Office for South Viet-Nam. Operating under the orders of the North Vietnamese Reunification Department, the Central Office directed six regional units within South Viet-Nam—Interzones V through IX and the special zone of Saigon/Cholon/Gia Dinh. These were both political and military units, operating under regional committees and directing Viet Cong activities down through provincial, district, and village levels.²⁷ Tran Nam Trung, known as Bay Quang, was thought to be the chief political commissar for all of South Viet-Nam. Operating under cover for several years, he came into the open in early 1964.²⁸

Viet Cong guerrilla commands comprised both mobile and territorial units, the difference between them becoming important only in 1960, when the insurgency moved from underground resistance into open combat. Mobile units were largely composed of hard-core regulars (chuluc), either recruited in the South or infiltrated from the North, while the territorial units (regional battalions and local militia) operated largely within their home areas.

Viet Cong Base Areas

The wooded jungles and swamps of South Viet-Nam offered safe bases for the Viet Cong from the very beginning. Some bases, in fact, dated back to 1945. Although subject to air

VIET CONG BASES IN SOUTH VIET-NAM 1963



attack and penetration by strong government troop units, these areas were generally reclaimed by the Viet Cong as soon as troops passed by. Bases usually included a command post with radio communication facilities, a hospital, a weapons repair shop or even a small arms plant, and a political and military training school. In some cases, there was a basic training camp or an officer training academy. By 1963 there were altogether about 20 Viet Cong base areas in the country, located (1) in the U-Minh swamps of the Camau Peninsula and in the Mekong Delta, (2) in an arc around Saigon—including the Daong Minh Chau battle zone in Tay Ninh Province along the Cambodian border and Zone D just north of Saigon, and (3) throughout the Highlands and central Viet-Nam.

The guerrillas, especially those in the rice-producing Mekong Delta regions, did not suffer from any lack of foodstuffs. Continued access to the sea was important to the Viet Cong, however, since South Viet-Nam's inland streams do not contain edible fish and the Vietnamese have traditionally supplemented their diet with protein-rich fish from the sea. The food situation was most critical for the Viet Cong units in the Highlands, where food was in short supply and they were farthest from the sea.

Arms and Ammunition

The Viet Cong were originally able to equip their units with weapons of U.S., French, Japanese, British, Czech, Russian, German, and even Danish manufacture, mainly obtained from inside South Viet-Nam. They found it to their greatest advantage to base their armament and ordnance on that of their adversary, from whom they could capture ammunition and spare parts.

In 1963, specialized artillery and antiaircraft units began to appear, and a deliberate effort was undertaken to standardize military equipment within increasingly larger units. Thus, by late 1963, the regular (chu-luc) mobile units were likely to have standard U.S. light weapons and also recoilless rifles, or Chinese or even locally made copies which could fire the same ammunition. The regionals (dia-phuong-quan), however, were likely to have to make do with more obsolete weapons, and the militia (dan-quan or du-kich) were usually armed with locally made rifles and very old French and Japanese weapons.

External Support and Sanctuary

The Viet Cong undoubtedly received external aid from an early date, although from which countries and to what extent was not altogether certain. North Viet-Nam was undoubtedly the chief source of direct external support, with China and Cambodia other possible sources, but to a less direct degree. The author estimates that, through 1963, less than 10 percent²⁹ of the materiel requirements of the Viet Cong came from outside South Viet-Nam, including medical supplies, maps, and propaganda equipment.³⁰ The only weapons known to have been introduced were

North Vietnamese copies of American recoilless weapons and Chinese copies of Soviet bloc and American weapons. Since that date, weapons deliveries have apparently been stepped up.³¹

North Viet-Nam of course served as a staging and training area for Viet Cong reinforcements. Of the 90,000 South Vietnamese who reportedly went north after 1954, some were trained and sent back south. It has been officially stated by American sources that there were 1,800 "confirmed" infiltrators in 1959-60, 3,700 in 1961, 5,800 in 1962, 4,000 in 1963, and an estimated 10,000 in 1964. Unconfirmed estimates of infiltrators for these years totalled 34,000--believed to be a more realistic figure. Whereas most infiltrators before 1964 were southern born, after 1964 most were believed to be native northerners. The infiltrators were used to fill vacancies in Viet Cong units or to form cadres for new ones; and about half of the Viet Cong hard-core strength was, as of the end of 1964, believed to be native northerners or northern trained. As of that date, there was no evidence of Chinese "volunteers."³²

The importance to the Viet Cong of the foreign sanctuary in North Viet-Nam and across the western border districts, especially through 1963, may have been the political and psychological support thus afforded. Linked with their comrades to the North via both sea routes and the famous complex of trails known collectively as the Ho Chi Minh trail, Viet Cong guerrillas were able to avoid the feeling of isolation and encirclement which often plagued insurgents elsewhere. The existence of an active sanctuary across South Viet-Nam's sieve-like frontier offered opportunities, not only for training, but also for rest and relaxation, at least for the Viet Cong leaders, who often slipped out of the country at crucial moments. Nguyen Huu Tho and Nguyen Van Hieu were often seen in Hanoi and neutralist Cambodia, and NLF/SVN delegations later began to appear at various meetings and congresses of Communist-dominated and neutralist nations. Although even the Communist-bloc nations--mindful of earlier disappointing experiences with "liberation movements" that ultimately failed--had not recognized the NLF/SVN as a government by 1964, there were nonetheless quasi-diplomatic National Liberation Front representatives in Czechoslovakia, Algeria, Cuba, Indonesia, and Mainland China.

Strength and Organization

In 1957, the overall strength of Viet Cong forces was estimated at about 6,000 men; by 1960, estimates of total Viet Cong strength hovered around the 25,000 mark, of whom one-third were thought to be regulars. Despite the South Vietnamese government's official claim of an annual "kill rate" of about 25,000 to 30,000 Viet Cong since 1962,³³ insurgent forces steadily increased. By mid-1964, Viet Cong forces in South Viet-Nam were estimated to comprise from 28,000 to 34,000 regulars, about half of them northern trained, and perhaps 70,000 to 80,000 local guerrillas (regionals and militia).³⁴

The military strength of the Viet Cong was reflected in its organization, which changed in the period after 1957 from isolated platoons to regimental-size units operating in the Highlands

and to temporary multi-battalion battle groups under unified command operating in the Camau Peninsula. Viet Cong units were recognizable by their unit designation: regular battalions had 3-digit numbers ranging from 502 to 634; regular companies usually had numerals in the 200 series, as did the regional battalions. Regimental-size units operating in the Highlands took on the numbers which designated their Viet Minh predecessors during the previous Indochina conflict, a reflection of the prestige attached to these elite units. Some units still had names drawn from Viet-Nam's history, but these tended to disappear as Viet Cong units became more standardized. By the end of 1963, the estimated Viet Cong forces comprised 5 regiments, 34 independent battalions, 129 independent companies, and 100 independent platoons. During 1964, platoons dropped to 29, while companies rose to 135, battalions to 47, and regiments remained at 5.³⁵

In the Highlands the Viet Cong organized regular and supporting guerrilla units among the montagnards. These tribal peoples had been involved on both sides during the Franco-Viet Minh conflict, and after 1954 the Communists took tribal cadres north for training and indoctrination. North Vietnamese treatment of the montagnards in the area, and particularly their granting of some governmental autonomy to these peoples, were probably strong elements in favorably impressing the montagnards from South Viet-Nam. Most of these cadres were later reinfilitrated into South Viet-Nam, forming the nucleus of Viet Cong forces in the Highland area. Viet Cong units composed primarily of tribal elements operated around Pleiku, Kontum, and Ban Methuot. Astride the Ho Chi Minh trail complex, the montagnards were an important link between the insurgents and their external allies in Laos and North Viet-Nam.

The city and immediate vicinity of Saigon comprised a special sector in the Viet Cong organization. The mobile headquarters for this special sector was reputed to operate about 10 miles outside the city limits near the northwestern edge of Gia Dinh Province. The special sector apparently commanded about 120 full-time operatives disguised as common laborers and organized into two detachments. In addition, local residents could be called into service. The Viet Cong were presumed to be able to call upon some 200 trained saboteurs, each of whom might in turn head up his own groups of supporters in the city.³⁶

Communications and Intelligence Operations

Communications among widely scattered Viet Cong headquarters and personnel were maintained through a regular system of couriers. It was believed that the insurgents made ingenious use of open and public facilities to transmit secret military information in code. Broadcasts from Radio Hanoi were believed to contain coded messages, as were seemingly innocuous articles in the Saigon press. The fact that rural mail carriers were generally immune to attack in areas where no other government presence was allowed to go unchallenged led to the assumption that Viet Cong made good use of the postal system to send military information in personal letters and telegrams.³⁷

Communist intelligence operations were extensive and well planned from the very beginning. The North Vietnamese regime in Hanoi operated a Central Research Agency (CRA, Cục Nghiên-Cau Trung-Uong), directly under the National Defense Committee of the North Vietnamese government. The Committee included President Ho Chi Minh, Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, and Defense Minister (Gen.) Vo Nguyen Giap. The CRA had six main sections for administration: cadres, communications, espionage, research, and training, and a special code unit. According to a U.S. State Department report, there was an "extensive effort by the C. R. A. to penetrate all Republic of Viet-Nam Government agencies, foreign embassies, and other specialized organizations."³⁸ The insurgents appeared to be thoroughly acquainted with U.S. operations in Viet-Nam, for example, a brochure printed in Hanoi as early as July 1958 contained a complete table of organization for the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG).³⁹ Although the MAAG structure as such was not classified, the names and individual assignments of American officers were not part of the public domain. The same brochure also contained a reproduction of the new Saigon-Bien Hoa highway project map as presented to the Vietnamese secretary of the interior and bearing the signature of the head of Saigon's Highway Department, where the document had apparently been photographed by a Communist agent.⁴⁰

Local Intelligence and Propaganda Organizations

Inside South Viet-Nam, the Viet Cong developed extensive local intelligence and propaganda organizations, specifically geared to particular propaganda targets. Apparently under the organizational control of the CRA, these organizations included the Dich-Van, the Tri-Van, the Binh-Van, and the Dan-Van. Van meant, in this connection, "to turn, convert, or subvert," and dich meant the "enemy," tri the "intellectuals," binh the "military," and dan the "peasant masses."

Dich-Van agents collected intelligence, disseminated Viet Cong propaganda, and set up underground cells in villages where the Viet Cong could not operate openly. The normal pattern was for a Dich-Van team of 5 to 15 men to take up residence in a village or area, investigate its psychological and administrative strengths and vulnerabilities, get to know the people, and propagandize the insurgent cause—before organizing a local Viet Cong administrative committee (ty ban hanh-chinh). Dich-Van agents also carried out what was euphemistically termed "armed propaganda," or selective terrorism against those villagers who failed to respond to Viet Cong overtures.

The Tri-Van, which worked specifically with professionals, students, and intellectuals, was concentrated in the cities. In March 1963, the government discovered an extensive cell in Saigon, headed by Pham Thi Yen, a woman pharmacist. In several provinces, civil servants' groups were infiltrated. It was also thought that some Buddhist groups were infiltrated.

The Binh-Van directed its attention to government soldiers and the government paramilitary organizations, urging both individual soldiers and entire units to desert, to sell or surrender

their weapons and equipment, or to arrange a local cease-fire. Another Binh-Van gambit was to announce that government units without U.S. advisers would not be attacked, in an attempt to make South Vietnamese soldiers fear the presence of U.S. advisers. By the fall of 1964, there was strong evidence of Binh-Van effectiveness: in fact, the Viet Cong claimed that 40,000 government soldiers had defected to them during the previous year.⁴¹

Propaganda Themes

Viet Cong propaganda appeals generally reflected the Communists' "separatist" line, advocating support of the National Liberation Front rather than membership in the Communist Party. Nor did Communist propaganda emphasize immediate reunification with North Viet-Nam, although this was frankly admitted to be one of their eventual goals. The major recurrent themes of Viet Cong propaganda were peace, land, and liberation from foreign influence. The main thrust was devoted to extolling South Vietnamese patriotic feeling and the need to throw out both the foreigner—clearly identified as the United States—and the South Vietnamese government—depicted as the minion of the foreigner. The Diem government was consistently referred to as the "My-Diem clique," meaning simply the "American-Diem" regime. In general, the Viet Cong theme was outlined in the Program of the National Liberation Front, which opened with "Overthrow the camouflaged colonial regime of the American imperialists and the dictatorial power of Ngo Dinh Diem, servant of the Americans . . ."⁴²

Early Operations Emphasize Terrorism

Viet Cong operations showed a steady progression in the strength and openness of their attack and its effectiveness. In the initial period from August 1956 to January 1960, Viet Cong operations were mainly those of a stepped-up underground resistance. The underground apparatus of Viet Minh days was reactivated; propaganda units were formed; and cells gathered intelligence for operations that would yield arms and supplies.⁴³ Mothballed arms caches were strategically located, although over 3,000 dumps in South Viet-Nam were lost in this period to government searches.⁴⁴ The Viet Cong generally limited their overt operations to the assassination and kidnaping of local administrative officials in outlying areas and avoided military clashes, except for a few commando-type raids and terrorist bombing attacks against U.S. installations in Saigon.⁴⁵ At this time the insurgents actively consolidated their hold over peasant villages, especially in the Delta and along the Cambodian border, where they posed as defenders of peasant interests against both the landlords and government tax collectors.

The success of the Viet Cong in gaining control of the civilian administration of villages is shown by South Vietnamese government figures published over the past years. In 1957 it became obvious to this observer that the assassination of village leaders—mayors, police commissioners, policemen, teachers, youth leaders, etc.—had assumed proportions and patterns likely to destroy

the entire fabric of local administration in South Viet-Nam within a short time.⁴⁶ In March 1958, the government admitted that 472 village chiefs had been killed during the previous year. That same month U.S. Ambassador Elbridge Durbrow testified in Washington that the insurgents had "regrouped and stepped up their terrorist activities" particularly in the Mekong Delta, where the "peasants, through fear or intimidation, cannot till their fields properly"⁴⁷

Pursuing a deliberate program, the Viet Cong had begun by 1959—as the pattern of village leaders killed indicated—to concentrate on encircling Saigon with villages faithful to its cause. U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara has stated that "In 1960 and 1961, almost 3,000 Vietnamese civilians in and out of Government were assassinated* and another 2,500 were kidnaped."⁴⁸ By mid-1962, the Viet Cong were credited with having kidnaped more than 1,200 teachers, always a favorite Communist target.⁴⁹

By the end of 1962, the Communists had, according to one study, "managed to extend their influence, in varying degrees, to about 80 percent of the Vietnamese countryside."⁵⁰ The insurgents were able to collect "taxes" in all but three South Vietnamese provinces by March 1963, according to a United States Operations Mission (USOM) report.⁵¹ South Vietnamese government sources indeed conceded that by April 1964 about 42 percent of the villages were under Viet Cong control, 24 percent were in a sort of administrative limbo, and only 34 percent were under government control.⁵²

Overt Guerrilla Warfare

Meanwhile, in January 1960, a new phase of Viet Cong operations was heralded by a massive 500-man night attack on a battalion arms and ammunition dump of the 32d South Vietnamese Infantry Regiment at Trang-Sup near Tay Ninh. In an hour's fighting, the Viet Cong apparently lost only 4 dead and 1 captured, while inflicting casualties of 35 dead and 31 wounded. They captured 751 weapons.⁵³ This battle ushered in a period of overt guerrilla warfare. Battalion-size insurgent attacks became frequent, antitank weapons appeared on a larger scale, and anti-aircraft fire grew more effective.

The Viet Cong developed the tactics of ambush and surprise assault to a fine art. A favorite tactic was to attack a government outpost with a small force, while larger units lay in wait for the relief columns sent to the aid of the besieged garrison. Such ambushes accounted for many of the Viet-Cong's spectacular victories. The insurgents learned to use captured radio equipment to good advantage in coordinating attacks and relaying information on the movement and strength of government forces. They also developed a wide range of jungle boobytraps and simple but effective antipersonnel devices, such as sharpened, fire-hardened bamboo stakes

*Figures given for such casualties tend to be inconsistent, but indicate the seriousness of the problem. President John F. Kennedy, in his Special State of the Union Address, May 25, 1961, stated that 4,000 minor officials had been murdered during 1960-61.

placed in ditches and concealed in the foliage on either side of the trails. Caltrops, made by driving barbed nails through planks, were laid in rice paddies. These devices, the preparation of which was one of the services performed by villagers under Viet Cong control, made it difficult for government troops, when a sneak attack began, to take cover without being impaled and wounded, if not killed.⁵⁴

Conventionalization of Conflict

After January 1963, the Viet Cong often employed conventional tactics. In that month, at Ap Bac, they accepted battle with government forces in broad daylight, inflicting casualties estimated at 35 dead and over 100 wounded.⁵⁵ So began a series of large-scale encounters with government forces in which the Viet Cong held their ground and attacked on their own initiative. By April 1964, regimental-size units appeared, as at Kien Long in Chuong Thien Province, where for the first time the Viet Cong used three battalions simultaneously to hold their own against air-supported units in broad daylight until able to make their withdrawal in good order.⁵⁶

Thus the Viet Cong, in a wide-ranging campaign involving subversion and control of the South Vietnamese population and increasingly effective military attacks on the armed forces of the nation, hoped to regain the opportunities offered them at the Geneva Conference of 1954 and subsequently denied them by President Diem.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

When Ngo Dinh Diem became President of South Viet-Nam in 1955, he was a man marked by both circumstance and personal ambition to play a major role in life.⁵⁷ Born on January 3, 1901, Diem was the son of a well-educated and aristocratic, but not wealthy, mandarin family. The family had been converted to Catholicism in the 17th century and in the 19th century had reportedly lost a number of members who were locked in a church and burned to death by a Buddhist mob. Diem himself shared his family's strong religiosity and in his youth entered a seminary to prepare for the priesthood. Although he never entered the priesthood, he was said to have taken his own private vow of celibacy; indeed, there were those who felt that the Church was too flexible and pliant for Diem.

Diem's Experience and Philosophy

Like his father before him, Diem was an ardent nationalist; he thus undertook to work for the French in the belief that this was the best means of advancing Vietnamese nationalist aims. In 1921, he finished at the top of a special class for future French administrators in Hanoi and took a job with the French government of Viet-Nam. He became known as an able, industrious, and honest administrator and reached the rank of provincial governor. When he joined the

central government in Hué as Minister of the Interior in 1933, however, he was soon convinced that French and Vietnamese aims were incompatible. Breaking with both the French and the figurehead Vietnamese Emperor Bao Dai, Diem resigned his office in mid-1933, returned all titles and decorations, and retired from public life. Although offered important posts at various times by the Japanese, by the Viet Minh, and by the Emperor, Diem remained out of public life for the next 21 years. The abstinence from public affairs was, on the whole, salutary—it left Diem's reputation as a nationalist unsullied, gave him a chance to keep in touch with the nationalist movement, and offered him freedom to reflect upon the deeper meaning of his life and endeavors.

Diem's political philosophy was based upon the idea of "personalism" as originated by Emmanuel Mounier. While emphasizing human dignity, in contrast to the Communist concept of the individual person as a part of the "masses," Mounier questioned the value of certain Western political institutions: "The parliamentary state is little more than an anachronism . . . Political democracy must be entirely reorganized on the basis of an effective economic democracy adapted to modern structures of production . . ." In Western Europe, personalism was adapted by a number of French Catholic existentialists and moved to the left; in South Viet-Nam, it was to move toward the right. Nhan-vi is composed of the Vietnamese words for "person" and "dignity" and may be translated as "personalism." The Diem regime gave it connotations of totalitarianism and elitism. In its totalitarian aspect, personalism was to reinforce the regime's dislike of opposition and intolerance of any way except its own; in its elitist aspect, personalism reinforced the Confucian and mandarin background of Diem's family.

Personalist policies were also to affect the fight against the Viet Cong. For example, officers were apparently assigned and promoted more on the basis of their personal favor with the presidential entourage than on their professional ability. In much the same way, it was claimed that government troops were sent to provinces, not so much on the basis of military need as of the personal relationship between the President and the province chief.

The Role of Diem's Family

To an unusual degree, the bachelor President Diem was dependent upon his family. This showed particularly clearly in the roles played by Diem's brother Ngo Dinh Nhu and his brother's wife Tran Le Xuan, better known as Madame Nhu. Although ten years younger than Diem, Nhu was said to have always had a strong influence over his older brother. It was Nhu, for example, who introduced Diem to personalism. As the political adviser to the President and the acknowledged power behind the throne, Nhu was fascinated by the ability of the Communists to take men and mold them to their liking. In time Nhu adopted many Communist techniques. It was reported, for example, that he held regular Friday afternoon "self-criticism" sessions in the Palace, aimed, as he said, at "sweeping all rotten elements out of the government

machinery. . . .⁵⁹ Above all others in the Diem regime, Nhu was least tolerant—indeed, openly derogatory—of the Western democratic political process. In perhaps his most useful function, Nhu served as the focus of much anti-Diem feeling in South Viet-Nam, since many who hated him apparently still believed in the President.⁶⁰

Still stranger than the role of Ngo Dinh Nhu, perhaps, was that of his wife. Petite, attractive, magnetic in personality, Madame Nhu alternately charmed and antagonized. Officially acting as First Lady for her brother-in-law, she became a public personage in her own right through her political speeches and trips abroad. Extremely puritanical, she supported and pushed through a series of highly unpopular regulations dealing with marriage, family life, and personal relations. Among other things, these made polygamy, and even Western-style dancing and beauty contests, illegal. Not too surprisingly, these measures created a climate of ill will toward the government. Madame Nhu also headed a women's paramilitary organization, the Women's Solidarity Movement.

Although an external parallelism between the Republic of Viet-Nam and Western parliamentary regimes often led observers to conclude that President Diem had real popular support, in actual fact the Diem government was a tight dictatorship exercised by Ngo Dinh Diem and his family. Many major office holders in the RVN came from the President's immediate entourage. In addition to his brother and Madame Nhu, there were three other brothers—Ngo Dinh Can, de facto ruler of central Viet-Nam; Monsignor Ngo Dinh Thuc, Archbishop of Hue; and Ngo Dinh Luyen, Ambassador to London. Tran Trung Dung, a nephew of Diem, was for a time the Secretary of Defense; Tran Van Chuong, father of Madame Nhu, was Ambassador to Washington until the summer of 1963.

Attitude Toward Political Opposition

Vietnamese political parties, with the exception of the illegal Communist Party, had rarely been more than small personal cliques, and the Diem regime did not encourage them to develop. There existed only one political party worthy of the name, the National Revolutionary Movement, which was sponsored by the regime. Another arm of the government was the secret Workers' Personalist Revolutionary Party (Can-Lao Nhan-Vi Cach-Mang Dang); led by Ngo Dinh Nhu, this party infiltrated and spied upon all other organizations in the country.⁶¹ All elections held by the regime were controlled. When a single representative of the Vietnamese Democratic Party, Dr. Phan Quang Dan, ran for parliament in 1959 and won handily despite the government's opposition to his candidacy, he was indicted for vote fraud and deported to the prison island of Poulo Condore. This was not an exceptional case: after the overthrow of the Diem regime in November 1963, some 30,000 non-Communist political prisoners were found in concentration camps.⁶²

The elimination of any kind of loyal opposition tended to polarize many of the opponents of the Diem regime around the Communist end of the political spectrum.⁶³ One exception was the

Hoa Hao sect, which remained aloof from Communist blandishments; after the Diem government had broken its main power, approximately three remaining Hoa Hao battalions fought against both the government and the Viet Cong. By and large, however, it was the regime's own narrow-minded policies which helped to provide the Communists with a ready-made political base.

Initial Reactions to Viet Cong Insurgency

Both the character and philosophical beliefs of the President and his entourage made it difficult for the government of South Viet-Nam to recognize that it, like the French, was faced with a revolutionary conflict. President Diem considered his government the true expression of Vietnamese nationalism and revolution, and was reluctant to admit the existence of an insurgency similar to that which had confronted the French; he mistook the beginnings of the Viet Cong insurgency for the dying embers of the first Indochina conflict. In early 1957, an official government statement was made to the effect that "the Viet-Minh authorities [inside South Viet-Nam] have disintegrated and been rendered powerless."⁶⁴

Certain American civilian advisers in South Viet-Nam tended to support and reinforce that impression. The head of the Michigan State University Advisory Group to Viet-Nam, who was charged with supervising the training and modernization of the police force, asserted in August 1958 that South Viet-Nam could be classed as "one of the most stable and peaceful countries of Asia today. If the public impression is that terrorism has increased, we of the Michigan State group are perhaps partly to blame as a result of our successful efforts to convince the Vietnamese police of the value of full and complete recording of all criminal activities."⁶⁵ An American personal adviser to President Diem was to write one year later--when Viet Cong terrorism against civil servants at the village level was reaching major proportions--that "local Viet Minh agents in remote areas of the western and southwestern parts of the country continue to engage in murderous missions." Adding a phrase which significantly summed up the prevailing view of the Vietnamese situation as it was then widely held in official circles, he noted that "the real danger to the country lies in the Communist forces poised northward of the 17th parallel . . . and the ease with which the Communists can penetrate the borders of Laos and Cambodia."⁶⁶

Mission and Organization of ARVN

Strategic decisions made during the early days of the Republic seriously affected its ability to recognize and cope with the Communist insurgency in its initial stages. The 1954 cease-fire had frozen the force and equipment levels of the Army of the Republic of Viet-Nam (ARVN), and both France and the United States had agreed that changed circumstances in the area required a change in the mission of the ARVN. Theoretically, French Union Forces and those of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) powers were to protect South Viet-Nam from foreign aggression; the ARVN's mission was to be internal pacification. When the French Union Forces

were withdrawn in 1956, however, the ARVN's mission was again changed: in case of invasion, it was to conduct a holding and delaying action until SEATO forces could come to its aid, and its internal security mission was deemphasized, in the belief that this latter mission could henceforth be handled entirely by civilian police.⁶⁷ The organization, deployment, and training of the ARVN were then geared to resisting a Korea-type attack across the 17th parallel by conventional North Vietnamese forces, which had been greatly increased between 1954 and 1956. In 1956, on the eve of the insurgency, the ARVN—almost 250,000-strong in 1954—had been reduced to about 140,000 men, grouped into eight field divisions and three army corps, with an airborne brigade. Paramilitary organizations were dissolved or given little or no financial or training support.⁶⁸

Originally organized under French tutelage in 1949, the ARVN had not acquired an autonomous command structure until 1954, and it remained subordinate to the French Union high command, at least in theory, until April 26, 1956. Training had been conducted by a French Military Mission, with French training detachments in almost all Vietnamese units and military schools. During the 1954-56 period, American advisers from the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG), created in 1950, gradually replaced the French Military Mission. The American advisory group was headed at this time by Lt. Gen. Samuel T. Williams. With the experience of Korea and the case of Dien Bien Phu fresh in mind, the Americans tended to emphasize conventional warfare tactics in their training of ARVN forces.⁶⁹ Consequently, much of the practical experience gained by the French in their eight years of fighting Communist guerrillas in Indochina was lost to the Vietnamese. For example, the small mobile units that had been developed by the French when conventional formations proved ineffective were replaced by large regular army units.⁷⁰

Early Responses Prove Ineffective

During the early phase of the counterinsurgency, which might be dated from 1956 through 1960, the problem of Viet Cong terrorism was regarded as a police matter. The government sponsored a Communist Activities Denunciation Campaign (To-Cong) in which persons suspected of having Communist leanings were to be reported to the police. This arbitrary and crude security system had the effect of clogging the security apparatus with investigation of thousands of trumped-up cases reported by personal enemies, as well as sending thousands of innocent people into concentration camps where the real Communists took them in hand and often made them into Communist sympathizers.⁷¹

The government made no attempt to use French planters and rubber plantation managers to combat the spread of Viet Cong operations during this early period. In 1954, the Vietnamese regime had specifically forbidden Frenchmen who remained in the country to keep weapons, even though the Saigon government was unable to provide for the security of plantation areas. As a result, the rubber planters did not raise plantation self-defense forces as they had during the first Indochina conflict, and those who survived generally did so by coming to terms with the Viet Cong.⁷²

If military tactics were employed at all in this period, they were haphazard and often patterned after the least-inspired French methods. In some instances, small garrisons tried to defend untenable fixed outposts and watchtowers. In other instances, division size operations undertook broad sweeps through the countryside and likewise floundered, precisely because their strength in numbers precluded secrecy of movement and any element of surprise.

Formation of Paramilitary Organizations

Some members of the Diem government were aware of the danger of unchecked guerrilla operations in the countryside, and it was at their insistence that a small Self-Defense Corps (Dan Ve) was organized in 1955 at village level. American aid to the Dan Ve was, however, far less than the arms and training which MAAG lavished on the ARVN. Americans opposed granting material assistance to the Dan Ve under conditions current in the latter half of the 1950's on the grounds that Communists, already in control of many villages, would infiltrate the Self-Defense Corps and that all aid would therefore be wasted. The Civil Guard (Bao An) was organized under the presidency, then moved to the Department of Interior. Its job was to maintain lines of communication and protect roads and bridges. It also fought in these early days without adequate training or equipment and even without medical aid. This was remedied in late 1960 when it was transferred to the Defense Ministry and U. S. aid became available for it. By this time, the Viet Cong insurgency had grown markedly in strength and it had become clear that the Dan Ve and Bao An were the government's first line of defense.⁷³

Other paramilitary forces available to aid the government were the private armies raised by many Catholic priests to defend their communities against the Viet Cong. Of these, the best known was that of Father Nguyen Lac Hoa, a former battalion commander in the Chinese Nationalist Army who had firsthand experience in fighting guerrilla communism. Father Hoa raised and led a force of over a thousand men, mainly Chinese settlers, to protect his Mekong Delta parish.⁷⁴

Increased U.S. Military Involvement

Some four years passed before the steadily deteriorating security situation in the countryside forced the government and its foreign advisers to adopt radical changes in tactics and strategic concept. By January 1960, the Viet Cong had begun all-out guerrilla warfare and in the fall the ARVN suffered a series of military setbacks. In September 1960, Lt. Gen. Lionel C. McGarr took command of MAAG in South Viet-Nam and set up a commando training center at the former French commando training base of Nha-Trang, which the Americans had previously used for training Vietnamese noncommissioned officers along conventional lines. Early in 1961, American military advisers began to accompany ARVN units into the field at battalion level.⁷⁵

In May 1961, then Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson visited South Viet-Nam, and the Eugene Staley mission followed. The Staley report recommended increases in the strength and weaponry of South Vietnamese forces. On October 18, 1961, the Diem regime declared a state of emergency, and in that same month President John F. Kennedy sent [then retired] Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor to Saigon on a factfinding mission. The Taylor mission recommended a concerted program of counterinsurgency operations in South Viet-Nam, involving military, political, and economic measures, with more active U.S. participation.⁷⁶ The acceptance and implementation of the proposals of the Taylor report marked a major development in U.S. policy toward South Viet-Nam and committed the United States to defeating the Communist insurgency in that country. In December 1961, the first American helicopter unit (57th Transportation Company) arrived in South Viet-Nam, and in the following year the American commitment in men and materiel was significantly increased.

The year 1962 saw Army signal, engineer, quartermaster, ground transport, ordnance, and medical forces, Army and Marine helicopters, and Air Force fixed-wing aircraft sent to South Viet-Nam. There was also a dramatic increase that year in U.S. adviser strength. From the 1954 Geneva truce terms, which had limited the American commitment to 685 men, U.S. strength had risen to only 785 men at the end of 1960 and to 2,000 by the end of 1961. In this early period there were about 12 U.S. military advisers for each ARVN division; it was soon to reach, in some cases, close to 300 U.S. advisers per division. During 1962, U.S. advisers were sent into South Viet-Nam at the rate of about 800 a month and by the end of the year, U.S. strength jumped to 11,000 men. By the fall of 1963, it reached an admitted 16,500.⁷⁷

MACV Set Up

On February 8, 1962, the U.S. Military Assistance Command Viet-Nam (COMUSMACV) was set up under the command of Gen. Paul D. Harkins, who remained throughout the rest of the Diem period. MACV progressively absorbed all American military activities in South Viet-Nam. U.S. officers and troops acted as advisers, working closely with South Vietnamese Army units in training and in combat duty jobs; U.S. Army elements were also helping in supply, transportation, and communications work. In addition, U.S. air, naval, and marine advisers were with South Vietnamese units, operating in a training and advisory capacity. In March 1962, American military advisers began to assist province chiefs, and by the end of 1963, they were operating down to the platoon level.

Specially trained counterinsurgency experts from U.S. Army Special Forces units and graduates of the Military Advisory Training Assistance (MATA) program were also introduced in 1962, their strength reaching about 600 by late 1963 and doubling a year later. In the Highlands, Special Forces personnel succeeded in consolidating many tribal units and in mobilizing thousands of tribal soldiers, grouped in Strike Forces and Strike Companies of the government's

Civil Irregular Defense Groups. American advisers from MATA began training South Vietnamese Civil Guard and Self-Defense Corps personnel, putting heavy emphasis on civic action by these paramilitary units.⁷⁸

Since U.S. troops were not yet committed to combat as units, American losses were relatively light during the Diem period: for the three-year period, 1961 through 1963, official sources listed 615 American casualties, including 107 killed in action. In 1964, American casualties rose to 1,173, including 136 killed. Of these 1964 losses, the Army suffered 1,009; the Navy and Marine Corps, 64; and the Air Force, 100.⁷⁹

U.S. Economic and Other Nations' Support

U.S. economic aid⁸⁰ to South Viet-Nam operated mainly through the United States Operations Mission (USOM) representing the Agency for International Development (AID). It was instrumental in supporting all the various counterinsurgent measures, such as resettlement programs and various civic action projects. The United States Information Agency (USIA) operated in South Viet-Nam through local offices in Saigon and in the countryside. The 1963-64 level of U.S. expenditures was around \$600 million, not counting Defense Department costs.⁸¹

Other nations also contributed to the counterinsurgency effort. Australia provided 66 military advisers and a few aircraft by the end of 1964, and Great Britain sent a few advisers with previous experience in Malayan counterinsurgency operations. By the end of 1964, small units of Korean, Filipino, New Zealand, and West German noncombatant advisers had also made their appearance in Viet-Nam. France continued certain programs of educational and industrial assistance.

Early Civic Action Programs

In 1960 the South Vietnamese government made an attempt to resettle the rural population in large urbanized communities known as agrovilles. The plan was to isolate the population from the insurgents, so that large-scale military operations could sweep through the countryside. This tactic failed, both militarily and psychologically—strangely enough, as a result of misconceptions concerning the way Vietnamese peasants lived and the way the Viet Cong fought. The peasants found the agrovilles too far removed from their fields and the whole program too poorly administered and burdensome to be attractive. The Viet Cong either moved into the towns with the population or temporarily cleared out of the sweep areas only to return as soon as ARVN forces—not large enough for permanent occupation or even semipermanent "saturation"—had left the area. The program was abandoned in 1961.⁸²

Widespread belief that the real object of the Vietnamese struggle was the "hearts and minds" of the people led to a wide range of psychological warfare and civic action schemes. Technologically, the government's programs, carried on with U.S. advice and assistance, were

probably the most extensive ever undertaken in so small a country. The Vietnamese Directorate of Psychological Warfare and Information, supervising all information media, operated a countrywide network of radio broadcasting stations; and this medium was augmented by the Voice of America and by French and British overseas broadcasting facilities. A comprehensive civic action program was outlined in an 11-point U.S. -RVN accord of January 2, 1962, which called for training of village officials, pest eradication and health inoculation programs, and the construction of schools and roads, among other activities. The United States supported the government's civic action program through the MATA program and through the Rural Affairs section of AID, which had advisory personnel in each of South Viet-Nam's 45 mainland provinces.

Strategic Hamlets

The major focus of this civic action program was through the strategic hamlets, which were developed in the spring of 1962. The Strategic Hamlet Program, which replaced the agrovilles, was begun in Binh Duong Province north of Saigon and in the Mekong Delta, under the respective code names of Operations SUNRISE and DELTA. Two types of strategic hamlets were planned. One, in Viet Cong areas, would involve the removal of the peasant population to fortified village units both smaller and closer to the fields than the agrovilles. The other, in more secure areas, would be based on the original villages and would not necessarily entail the total destruction of the home village, except possibly for the most outlying structures.⁸³

Supposedly patterned after the highly successful resettlement program carried on in Malaya, the strategic hamlet programs, despite the plans and despite some successes, generally did not live up to expectations.⁸⁴ First of all, population removals were often accomplished under conditions of duress and brutality, and included much loss of property. Insufficient time was given to remove private property, and the relocation site was occasionally so far away that water buffalo, essential to agriculture and the peasant's largest single investment other than his house, had to be shot. Funds made available for construction of dwellings in the new locations were generally insufficient to build houses even remotely comparable to those the villagers had been forced to abandon. Moreover, peasants were forced to build the new villages and their fortifications either without pay or with very little pay, and often at the loss of a whole crop season. Social services designed to make life in the new villages appealing, such as schools and infirmaries and clean water, were not made available in sufficient quantities.

Because the program had the highest government approval, provincial governors generally placed more emphasis on the number of hamlets declared "strategic" than on the effectiveness of the protection provided to the inhabitants. President Diem announced on October 1, 1962, seven months after the beginning of the program, that 7,267,517 "souls" were "living in safety" inside the hamlets, and he estimated that 9.2 million would be living in them by the end of the

year, with 600 hamlets scheduled for completion each month.⁸⁵ In actual fact, some of the hamlet defenses were hardly more than a light barbed-wire fence or bamboo-spiked ditch. The net result of this operation was that weapons, ammunition, two-way radio sets, and medical supplies often ended up in Viet Cong supply channels.

By November 1963, when the faults of the program were finally openly admitted, hardly 20 percent of the 8,000-odd hamlets were considered viable. In Camau's An Xuyen Province, they were practically all under Viet Cong control, while in the key Long An and Dinh Tuong Provinces south of Saigon they were 80 to 90 percent insurgent-controlled.⁸⁶ Only in some small areas of central Viet-Nam was the program executed in a more rational manner, and here the strategic hamlets did make a notable contribution to local security. Even these were lost, however, when in the absence of strong ARVN forces Viet Cong regulars began concentrating on these villages. Since November 1963, resettlement has been renamed the New Life Hamlet Program, but the program has not been emphasized as before.

Control Measures

The Diem government attempted to impose other measures of population control, but with limited success. An extensive identification-card system was developed but applied only to persons over 18 years of age, thus missing the 12-to-18-year age group which was being actively recruited and used by the Viet Cong.⁸⁷ Curfews were applied, varying from area to area according to the seriousness of the situation, and embargoes were imposed on such strategic items as typewriters, mimeograph machines, radio and photographic equipment, and medicine and drugs. In the larger cities, "strategic boroughs" were created. In Saigon, for instance, there were 265 such security areas in 1963. Iron mesh was installed at cafe windows to prevent grenade attacks, sidewalk cafes were closed, and street searches were carried out to curtail terrorist activity. There was no general policy of collective punishment, although instances occurred in which villages suspected of harboring Viet Cong terrorists were strafed or napalmed from the air.

The Chieu-hoi Program

A surrender program for Viet Cong military personnel and their civilian supporters was begun on April 17, 1963. This plan, patterned after similar schemes used in Malaya and the Philippines, was christened the "Movement to Regroup Misled Members of the Resistance" (Phong-Trao Chieu-Tap Khang-Chien Lam Duong) and was known as the "Open-Arms" (or Chieu-hoi) Plan. According to official figures, a total of 12,067 persons returned to the government side up to February 18, 1964, this total reaching 16,101 by October 1964. Judging from the few weapons they brought with them, those who surrendered were probably not hard-core Viet Cong. Furthermore, the figures indicated a decline in the rate of surrenders,

from about 1,200 a month for the first period to about 500 a month in the later period—an indication of the declining effectiveness of surrender appeals in a militarily compromised situation.⁸⁸

Military Buildup

Between 1961 and 1963, the military strength of South Vietnamese forces was constantly increased. The regular armed forces of the South Vietnamese were at a strength of 151,700 men in 1960-61. Following the recommendations of the Staley mission, the army was increased to 200,000 by September 1963. Naval strength was then 6,500; marine, 5,600; and air force, about 8,000. By that time, there were also 85,000 Civil Guards and 100,000 Self-Defense Corps. An armed Youth Brigade of about 5,000 young men and women was also drawn from the Republican Youth Movement, but its combat value was strictly nominal and it was later dissolved after Diem's downfall. In 1962, Vietnamese ranger companies, called Detached Action Forces (Biet Dong Quan), were organized; these were ferried into action by American-manned helicopters for a quick response to any Viet Cong appearance. The ranger units gave the ARVN an offensive edge in the countryside.⁸⁹

Air power, including the extensive use of helicopters, was an important factor in President Diem's counterinsurgent operations. By setting down its human cargo in a concentrated package instead of in the untidy spread of a paratroop drop, the helicopter provided the counterinsurgent commander with an important tool of fire and maneuver hitherto unavailable. On the other hand, helicopters were highly vulnerable to antiaircraft ordnance and even to small arms fire. Viet Cong harassment of helicopter operations led to the government's increased use of retaliatory aerial bombardment. An air exponent claimed that in 29,500 operational sorties carried out in the two years beginning in January 1962, air elements inflicted 13,000 Viet Cong casualties, damaged or destroyed 32,000 structures, and destroyed 2,800 river sampans.⁹⁰ Thirty-seven percent, or 7,500, of the 25,000 Viet Cong officially counted as killed in 1963 were attributed to Vietnamese air strikes.⁹¹ On the other hand, air operations inflicted much civilian distress and undoubtedly created anti-government reactions among the populations of bombed villages.⁹²

South Viet-Nam's many rivers and inland waterways, as well as its extended coastline, made innovations necessary in the field of amphibious and naval warfare. Use of M-113 armored personnel carriers with an inland amphibious capability increased the cross-country mobility of counterinsurgency troops. To protect the rivers and inlets, the Vietnamese Navy set up a River Force closely patterned on the naval assault divisions (dinassauts) developed by the French during the earlier Indochina conflict. To interdict Viet Cong supply junks, the government also created a paramilitary Junk Force of over 700 small craft to conduct search operations along South Viet-Nam's seacoasts, rivers, and other waterways.⁹³ The U.S. Navy,

operating in the Gulf of Tonkin, cooperated closely with this South Vietnamese effort. U.S. Coast Guard units were not added until 1965.

Military Operations and Problems

Military operations by the ARVN were generally stepped up in the 1961-63 period. An attempt was even made to carry guerrilla warfare and intelligence operations into North Vietnam. A special unit, known as the First Observation Group, was set up in 1961; it was organized into three companies, each comprising three fifteen-man combat teams and a twenty-four-man headquarters and support team. This Vietnamese group sent several commando teams north of the 17th parallel, but all were apparently wiped out very quickly.

The ARVN was often criticized by foreign observers for its failure to go on the offensive, and particularly for its reluctance to attack Viet Cong encampments at night, even when intelligence about the location of the insurgents was available. Critics pointed out that, in 1961-62, about 70 percent of the ARVN's casualties occurred among troops on static defense duty. Regular Army personnel were placed on garrison duty in areas in which the Civil Guards and Self-Defense Corps had proved inadequate to maintain static defense; the similar failure of the better-armed ARVN forces to hold these outposts not only undermined troop morale but also added to the insurgents' arms supply.⁸⁴

Tactical problems were never successfully solved during the Diem period. In general, there was a lack of coordination among ARVN commanders in the field, as well as a certain amount of silent friction between Vietnamese officials and American advisers. Cooperation among the various support units involved in the government's counterinsurgency program often suffered from poor use of intelligence information and poor tactical control in military operations. U.S. advisers complained of such tactical mistakes as the failure to put out flanking patrols during marches through Viet Cong territory or the failure to get blocking units into place in time to effect encirclement operations. There was an apparent tendency to rely too heavily on the military hardware and complex equipment which American aid made available, and some observers felt that the Vietnamese looked upon it as a substitute for, rather than as a means to achieve, closer contact with the enemy. Indiscriminate use of firepower by artillery, helicopter, and air units sometimes resulted in casualties among counterinsurgent forces on the ground and often inflicted civilian casualties—a matter that did not endear the government to the peasants. ARVN treatment of the local population was often criticized as irresponsible and unfeeling.⁸⁵

The Battle of Ap Bac

ARVN problems of tactical control and coordination were keenly illustrated when the government undertook a major offensive on January 2, 1963, against two Viet Cong companies known to be dug in at the village of Ap Bac near My Tho in the northern Mekong Delta. Anticipated as a

set-piece battle in which the ARVN, vastly superior in numbers and firepower and supported by armored personnel carriers, helicopters, and planes, could at last deal a major defeat to the Viet Cong, the battle of Ap Bac proved to be a singular governmental failure. The 2,000-man ARVN force suffered heavy casualties, while failing to drive some 200 Viet Cong from their crudely fortified positions in the village. In the end, the guerrillas broke through ARVN lines and disappeared into the countryside.⁴⁶

In February 1963, government forces had to meet 1,021 Viet Cong attacks in one week. Despite several spectacular victories in Viet Cong territory, the ARVN was unable to hold its gains. For example, government troops controlled Rang-Rang airstrip in the insurgents' Zone D for a while but later withdrew from the area, which returned to Viet Cong control. The point was that the physical occupation of insurgent territory was temporary and appeared to have no long-range effect. By the end of 1963, government forces operating inside South Viet-Nam were faced with an increasingly difficult situation in the vital Mekong Delta region and were even being challenged in the immediate vicinity of Saigon, although the ARVN was in a temporarily improved position in the Highlands and around Hué.

Political Dissidence Increases

The Diem government's military counterinsurgency effort was greatly weakened by dissatisfaction among large segments of the population—a dissatisfaction which increased as the insurgency continued. Political disaffection within South Viet-Nam's military and political elite twice erupted in unsuccessful coups d'état, once in November 1960 and again in February 1962. In addition, there was by 1963 an understandable war weariness among the population, which had been under duress for a generation. For this reason, some South Vietnamese gave a sympathetic hearing to French President Charles de Gaulle's proposal, in August 1963, for the neutralization, with international guarantees, of both North Viet-Nam and South Viet-Nam.⁴⁷ This reaction led to an additional cleavage inside the South Vietnamese military and civilian leadership—between pro-French elements identified with neutralism and pro-American elements identified with a policy of war-until-victory. A series of purges and counterpurges resulted.

Buddhist Protest Aids Viet Cong

A sudden upsurge of the Buddhists as a political force in 1963 further complicated the problem, as the Buddhist leadership seemingly leaned toward a solution that would provide for a non-Communist South Viet-Nam relying on international agreements alone rather than on American support to guarantee its independence.⁴⁸

President Diem's difficulties with the Buddhists became critical in May 1963 when local authorities in Hué, Viet-Nam's traditional capital and a center of Buddhist influence in the country, refused to allow Buddhist religious groups to display the Buddhist flag in parades

honoring Buddha's anniversary. Complaining that the Catholics had recently been allowed to fly their church banners, the Buddhists demonstrated against the ban on May 8, and Huế police fired into the crowd, allegedly killing nine demonstrators. This ignited smoldering resentments against what the Buddhists considered the government's favored treatment of South Viet-Nam's Catholic minority.

When Buddhist leaders instigated demonstrations in Saigon and other cities, the government responded by forbidding and breaking up religious processions, closing pagodas, and arresting ringleaders of the Buddhist opposition. Late in May, the General Association of Buddhists met and demanded permission to fly Buddhist flags, compensation for the families of demonstrators killed at Huế, and repeal of Decree No. 10, a regulation remaining from colonial days that gave the Catholic hierarchy certain legal privileges. On June 11, world attention was focused on South Viet-Nam's religious crisis when a Buddhist bonze (priest) committed suicide by publicly burning himself to protest official discrimination against the Buddhists. A series of spectacular self-immolations by Buddhists followed throughout the summer of 1963.

Although representatives of the government met with Buddhist leaders and on June 16 signed a communiqué agreeing to their flag demands and promising to work out a settlement in other areas of dispute, there was no real improvement in the situation. Over the next two months, anti-Diem forces and groups of many ideological hues and divergent backgrounds converged and joined the Buddhist opposition. These included Communist elements, who for the first time appeared to gain a respectable ally with genuine mass support. Thus, the Buddhist trouble escalated from a local religious issue into a nationwide political movement in opposition to the Diem regime. By August 1963, South Viet-Nam was faced with an insurgency within an insurgency, with the lines blurred between the two levels of conflict.

Diem Moves Against Buddhists

President Diem was met, on the one hand, with demands from his brother Nhu's faction within the regime for a sterner policy of police repression against the Buddhists; and, on the other, with diplomatic pressure from the United States urging him to come to terms with the Buddhists in order to press the war against the Viet Cong. Madame Nhu's intemperate remarks to foreign newsmen about Buddhist "barbecues" also contributed toward a worsening of South Viet-Nam's religious crisis. Finally, on August 20-21, the South Vietnamese government suddenly moved against the Buddhists. Martial law was declared in Saigon; hundreds of Buddhist priests and thousands of students allegedly involved in anti-government activities were arrested; and Buddhist pagodas and monasteries in Saigon and Hue were raided. These activities were carried out by the regime's secret police and Special Forces units under Ngo Dinh Nhu's control.

The August crackdown on the Buddhist dissidents had a disastrous effect on South Viet-Nam's public image abroad and especially on its relations with the United States. Madame Nhu's

father, Tran Van Chuong, a respected elder statesman and a Buddhist, resigned his post as ambassador to Washington in protest against his government's action. Foreign Minister Vu Van Mau also resigned in protest, shaving his head and departing for India on a Buddhist pilgrimage. On August 27, Cambodia broke off diplomatic relations with South Viet-Nam. Anxious for the Diem regime to reach an amicable settlement of its differences with the Buddhist majority in South Viet-Nam, the Americans had been expecting the government to make some real concessions to the Buddhists when the August coup de force occurred. Relations were further strained by the fact that this action had been taken in the interim between the departure from Saigon of U.S. Ambassador Frederick E. Nolting, Jr., who had served since March 1961, and the arrival of his successor, Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, who represented a "harder" U.S. line.

U.S. Disillusionment and Diem's Overthrow

During the next two months, the United States attempted to dissociate itself from Diem's repression of the Buddhists; and American spokesmen, including President Kennedy, made it abundantly clear that the United States would welcome changes in the Saigon government.⁹⁹ The removal of Ngo Dinh Nhu from power became a minimum requirement for improved relations between South Viet-Nam and the United States. Ambassador Lodge recommended that American economic aid to South Viet-Nam be reduced, and in public utterances and private conversations he lost no opportunity to draw a distinction between the country's military leaders and its political leadership in which the United States had lost confidence. The regime, on the other hand, made every effort to involve South Vietnamese Army leaders directly in its anti-Buddhist policies.

President Diem was aware of the imminent danger of a military coup d'etat by ARVN commanders, but he counted on Gen. Ton That Dinh, commander of the ARVN III Corps in the Saigon area and a trusted friend, to block any move to overthrow his government. On November 1, 1963, when such a coup broke out during the noon hours, Diem remained confident of eventual success against the ARVN rebels, as he had been successful twice before. But this time General Dinh had joined his fellow officers against Diem. While fighting continued in and around the Gia Long Palace throughout the night of November 1-2, Diem and Nhu fled, but in the morning they were apprehended as they left a Catholic church in Cholon and were summarily shot by rebel officers.¹⁰⁰ Thus ended the Diem regime and this phase of South Vietnamese counterinsurgency against Communist internal warfare.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

The period of President Diem's counterinsurgency seems to offer many lessons, most of them of a negative variety. In reviewing the problems that he faced, one must grant that he

tackled many formidable tasks; indeed, his early successes against such heavy odds hardly prepare one for his later failures. The deficiencies in military tactics of the Diem period have already been discussed, the lessons to be drawn from these explicit enough. It is therefore sufficient here to review and explicate some of the strategic lessons.

First, the Ngo Dinh Diem regime failed to diagnose correctly the aim, extent, and pervasiveness of the Communist challenge. General optimism and a completely false sense of security continued to prevail in official circles even after the insurgency had actually begun. In this early period, the American view of the strategic situation certainly contributed to this primary failure.

On an essentially non-political plane, President Diem appeared unable to motivate the South Vietnamese peasantry to support his counterinsurgency measures—not particularly surprising in view of the government's lack of trained administrators and inability to protect the population from Viet Cong attack. The government also failed to cope with the mutual suspicion and distrust between the various sectors of the population—Buddhist and Catholic, Vietnamese and montagnard. Diem had forfeited control over the countryside long before the Buddhist crisis precipitated his downfall.

The Diem regime also failed to consolidate a psychological hold over South Vietnamese elites, those who were politically motivated. It offered little opportunity for advancement except to the favored few. In addition, it failed to create an atmosphere in which dissidence could be expressed and safely channeled. Actually, it seemed almost to attempt to antagonize major groups of politically active South Vietnamese.

In line with its rejection of legitimate political opposition, the Ngo Dinh family perforce tried to create the minimum safeguard for its own survival against the illegitimate expression of political opposition. In the end, however, the attempt to create a capable and wholly loyal elite military group failed when trusted commanders joined the anti-Diem coalition and there was no pool of reliable commanders to draw upon.

The heavy reliance of Ngo Dinh Nhu on totalitarian measures—e.g., the forced movement of populations, the secret governmental Can-Lao party, the self-criticism meetings—was in the end a fourth failure, an illustration of the blind utilization of technique. Whereas the Communists had used such methods to achieve both negative and positive results, the Diem regime used them mainly to eliminate dissidence and thus failed to create true loyalty and esprit.

Fifth, the shortcomings of the regime included the failure to give due concern to the purely military details of winning the war against the Viet Cong. Long before the Buddhist uprisings of May 1963, the military effort was proving inadequate, yet officer promotions, for example, were still not based on performance. While the war was being lost on the political and social level, it was just as quickly being lost on the military level.

Finally, the failures of counterinsurgency that the Diem regime displayed may have been personal. Diem's inborn sense of asceticism and dissociation from others except his family eventually made it impossible for him to assess the situation clearly or to arouse the sympathies and energies of the masses. His strong feelings of nationalism and readiness to serve were aborted by his apparently even stronger feelings of elitism. Nationalism was for the upper classes, not the masses; and at the head of that small elect group was the Ngo Dinh family. Although heading a nation and espousing what he termed the true revolution, President Diem was, in the end, possibly the last of the mandarins.

Post-Diem Coups and Instability

After the fall of Diem in the military coup of November 1-2, 1963, a junta headed by Maj. Gen. Duong Van Minh ruled South Viet-Nam. Then on January 30, 1964, a new military coup was executed, led by the 37-year-old Lt. Gen. Nguyen Khanh,¹⁰¹ to forestall an alleged plot to neutralize South Viet-Nam. By August 25, new riots among students and Buddhists had forced Khanh, whom they accused of dictatorial tendencies, to resign from the presidency. In September, in a period of mounting crisis and attempted coups and counter-coups, the High National Council was created to oversee a return to civilian government, and on October 30 Tran Van Huong, mayor of Saigon, was named premier of a civilian cabinet. Governmental instability and Buddhist-led dissidence continued, and on January 27, General Khanh returned to power through another coup but was later overthrown again. Thus after Diem's overthrow, it was difficult to create a stable government able to pursue the counterinsurgent battle aggressively.

Perhaps because the political situation remained unstable, and the conflict appeared interminable, Diem's immediate successors in Saigon had very little success in winning an enthusiastic popular following. The military junta's only outstanding success in winning non-Communist dissidents to the government side was with the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai sects, who remained sworn enemies of the Diem regime after it suppressed them in 1955; since Diem's death, these sects have fought on the government side against the Viet Cong. In other areas, there appeared to be an attitude of wait-and-see.

The War Goes On

Military counterinsurgency in South Viet-Nam immediately after 1963 witnessed a noticeable retrenchment. Deadlines were muted, and emphasis was placed on a slow process of gradually clearing a small area at a time and saturating it with regular ARVN troops capable of withstanding the brutal attacks of well-armed Viet Cong regulars. These "oil spot" tactics were to include careful defensive preparations to secure one village at a time against Viet Cong depredations.¹⁰² With sufficient troops available day and night willing to engage in offensive patrolling, it was possible that the removal of the population to "new life hamlets" would become of minor

importance. By late 1964, new pacification methods were being extensively field-tested within a 12-mile radius around Saigon,¹⁰³ where the Viet Cong threat had grown.

Since 1963 there have been over a half million South Vietnamese under arms on the government side. At the end of 1964, Vietnamese forces totaled 240,000 regulars and 319,500 others. Casualties and desertions in the 1962-64 period, however, have cut into ARVN replacements and troop increments. Serious combat losses of over 1,000 a month depleted many firstline outfits, and a mounting desertion rate made certain units unreliable for extended combat duty. An accelerated Viet Cong drive to subvert ARVN troops was underway, and the Communists claimed some success in achieving local cease-fires. Obviously, this was a danger that the government had to overcome if it was to survive.¹⁰⁴ ARVN psychological warfare efforts were thus mainly directed at indoctrinating and boosting the morale of its own soldiers.

Certain ethnic problems once again erupted to plague the government. The montagnards, who had proved quite effective as counterinsurgent fighters, were transferred in May 1964 from U.S. Special Forces to ARVN control. Because of the mutual antipathy between the montagnards and the Vietnamese lowlanders, this switch was bitterly resented. As a result, tribal mutinies occurred during the fall of 1964, and much of the progress previously made was lost.

Ever-Increasing U.S. Participation and Communist Reaction

With the increasingly precarious military situation in South Viet-Nam the commitment of United States forces was increased. By the end of 1964, U.S. strength had been raised to 23,000 men. In all, there were about 24,000 foreign military personnel in South Viet-Nam, most of them Americans. The U.S. military organization was also strengthened; in May 1964, the MAAG and even the Office of the U. S. Military Attaché were subsumed under MACV. During the summer, Ambassador Lodge resigned and was succeeded by Maxwell B. Taylor. At this time, there were some 5,000 civilian personnel, mostly American technicians and advisers, in South Viet-Nam. U. S. economic and military costs rose by early 1965 to approximately \$2 million per day, totaling over \$3 billion since 1954.¹⁰⁵

The net result of foreign assistance must be measured in terms of the available alternatives: without U.S. assistance of the kind and scale that was made available, the Republic of Viet-Nam would probably have disappeared as a non-Communist state by late 1961. Even though the long-range survival of South Viet-Nam was by no means assured, the assistance program, for all its faults, was a success in this limited sense.

U.S. Involvement

On the Communist side, the U. S. stand had, of course, been violently attacked, but more so in China than in Russia. Here again, a Viet Cong victory with Red Chinese support might prove almost as distasteful to Russia as to the United States. Such a victory would tend to prove,

particularly to various anti-Western "national liberation" movements, that the Soviet course of coexistence was wrong and that the hard strategy advocated by Peking, on the theory that the United States is a "paper tiger," was basically correct.¹⁰⁰ This development could well bring about a weakening in the resolve of certain uncommitted governments to stand up to internal guerrilla pressures, particularly if the insurgents were supported by an outside force willing to challenge the United States. In that sense, the application of the "domino theory" to Southeast Asia may be too circumscribed: the theory may indeed apply on a worldwide scale. It could well be argued that a U.S. setback in counterinsurgency warfare in South Viet-Nam (or even a U.S. "victory" at an excessive price in destruction and casualties to the local inhabitants) would induce any other country faced with such a situation to choose surrender rather than a bitter and inconclusive decade-long struggle.

It would appear at this writing, in early 1965, that the United States faces a long commitment in South Viet-Nam, with heavy attrition and with the possibility that the conflict will escalate. Attacks by North Vietnamese patrol boats on U.S. destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin in late 1964 and stepped-up raids against American bases in South Viet-Nam in early 1965 resulted in retaliatory U.S. air strikes against North Vietnamese strategic military targets—driving home the point that an extension of the war to North Viet-Nam was not to be ruled out altogether. Substantial forces of U.S. ground troops and marines were committed to South Viet-Nam in April 1965.

Opponents of such an escalation assert that aerial or naval attacks against North Viet-Nam would have little immediate effect on the aggressiveness of the Viet Cong in the South; in fact, they could bring about the commitment of the still-intact North Vietnamese army, whose ability in jungle warfare was clearly demonstrated in the first Indochina conflict. That commitment, in turn, would require the use of American ground troops on a large scale in Southeast Asia—a prospect not viewed with any particular relish.

As of mid-1965, Viet Cong military strength was as yet unchecked; the South Vietnamese political situation was still unstable; and the possibility of escalation into a direct confrontation between major powers hovered as a direct threat.

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³Marguerite Higgins, "The Ugly Americans of Viet-Nam," America (October 1964), 377-378, passim.

⁴George L. Harris et al., U. S. Army Area Handbook for Vietnam (Washington: Special Operations Research Office, 1962), p. 128.

⁵U. S. Operations Mission (AID), Resources Control Survey, Viet-Nam (Saigon: 1963).

⁶U. S. Department of State, Aggression From the North: The Record of North Viet-Nam's Campaign to Conquer South Viet-Nam, Department of State Publication 7839 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1965), p. 26. Hereinafter referred to as White Paper 1965.

⁷Ibid.

⁸U. S. Department of State, Viet-Nam: The Struggle for Freedom, Department of State Publication 7724 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1964), pp. 7-8.

⁹Dwight D. Eisenhower, President's News Conference of April 7, 1954, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, 1954, pp. 381-383.

¹⁰U. S. Department of State, Viet-Nam, p. 1.

¹¹Cf. John D. Montgomery, The Politics of Foreign Aid: American Experience in Southeast Asia (New York: Praeger, 1962).

¹²Denis Warner, The Last Confucian: Vietnam, South-East Asia, and the West (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1964), pp. 137-141.

¹³Montgomery, The Politics of Foreign Aid, p. 119.

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¹⁵Embassy of Viet-Nam, News from Viet-Nam (Washington: March 17, 1956), p. 2.

¹⁶Speech by Ngo Dinh Diem on Radio Saigon, July 16, 1956.

¹⁷Cf. Bernard B. Fall, The Viet-Minh Regime (2d ed.; New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1956).

¹⁸U. S. Department of State, A Threat to the Peace: North Viet-Nam's Effort to Conquer South Viet-Nam, Department of State Publication 7308 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1961), Part II, p. 1.

¹⁹Ibid., Part II, p. 2.

²⁰For the full text of the NLF/SVN program, see Bernard B. Fall, The Two Viet-Nams: A Political and Military Analysis (Rev. ed.; New York and London: Praeger, 1964), pp. 449-453.

²¹U. S. Department of State, A Threat to the Peace, Part II, p. 8.

- ²²White Paper 1965, p. 22.
- ²³Warner, The Last Confucian, p. 153; Peter Grose, "Vietcong's 'Shadow Government' in the South," The New York Times Magazine, January 24, 1965, p. 67.
- ²⁴Fall, The Two Viet-Nams, pp. 356-357.
- ²⁵Warner, The Last Confucian, p. 168.
- ²⁶U.S. Department of State, A Threat to the Peace, Part II, p. 8.
- ²⁷White Paper 1965, pp. 22, 60.
- ²⁸Grose, "Vietcong's 'Shadow Government' in the South," loc. cit., p. 66. See also, Wilfred Burchett, Vietnam: Inside Story of a Guerrilla War (New York: International Publishers, 1965) for a Communist view.
- ²⁹Author's estimate; see Letter to the Editor, The Washington Post, May 1, 1965, p. A-14, for specific figures.
- ³⁰U.S. Department of State, A Threat to the Peace, Part I, pp. 32-38.
- ³¹White Paper 1965, pp. 14-20, 38-42.
- ³²John G. Norris, "Troop Flow from Hanoi Up Sharply," The Washington Post, January 27, 1965, pp. A-1 and A-15.
- ³³U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Viet-Nam and Southeast Asia (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 4.
- ³⁴New York Times, October 9, 1964; Bernard B. Fall, interview in U.S. News and World Report (September 28, 1964), p. 62; Norris, "Troop Flow from Hanoi . . .," pp. A-1 and A-15. Mid-1965 estimates were 100,000 guerrillas and 46,000 regulars.
- ³⁵Norris, "Troop Flow from Hanoi . . .," pp. A-1, A-15.
- ³⁶Grose, "Vietcong's 'Shadow Government' . . .," p. 66.
- ³⁷Ibid.
- ³⁸U.S. Department of State, A Threat to the Peace, Part I, p. 21; White Paper 1965, p. 25.
- ³⁹Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Imperialist Schemes in Viet-Nam Against Peace and Reunification (Hanoi: July 1958) (100 pp.).
- ⁴⁰Ibid.
- ⁴¹Le Figaro (Paris), October 1 and 2, 1964; The Washington Post, December 3, 1964, p. A-21.
- ⁴²Quoted in Fall, The Two Viet-Nams, p. 449; Alexander Askenasy, "Propaganda (Addendum D)," January 25, 1965 (internal working paper in SORO).
- ⁴³Stanley Karnow, in The Washington Post, May 19, 1964, p. A-16.
- ⁴⁴Warner, The Last Confucian, p. 154.
- ⁴⁵A U.S. Embassy residence in 1957, an enlisted men's billet in Saigon in 1957 (13 wounded), a U.S. major and sergeant (killed) in 1959, etc., which led the monthly Army (Ft. Benning, August-September 1960, p. 70) to the rather curious rationale: "The fact that these attacks have been made is a good indication that American aid is effective."
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- ⁴⁷Fall, The Two Viet-Nams, p. 324.
- ⁴⁸The New York Times, March 27, 1964.

- ⁴⁹Fall, The Two Viet-Nams, p. 361.
- ⁵⁰Robert Scigliano, "Viet-Nam: A Country at War," Asian Survey (January 1963).
- ⁵¹Fall, interview in U.S. News and World Report (September 28, 1964), p. 62.
- ⁵²Fall, The Two Viet-Nams, pp. 396-397.
- ⁵³Warner, The Last Confucian, p. 160.
- ⁵⁴Capt. John H. Woodyard, "Ambush by Bamboo," Infantry, 52 (July-August 1962), 10-11.
- ⁵⁵Richard Tregaskis, Vietnam Diary (New York, Chicago, San Francisco: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963), pp. 376, 378-379.
- ⁵⁶Bernard B. Fall, Street Without Joy (4th ed.; Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole, 1964), p. 365.
- ⁵⁷The discussion of Diem's personality and background is mainly based on Fall, The Two Viet-Nams, pp. 234-253; and Warner, The Last Confucian, pp. 84-106.
- ⁵⁸Emmanuel Mounier, Le Personnalisme (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1961), pp. 127-128, quoted in Fall, The Two Viet-Nams, p. 247.
- ⁵⁹Roy Essoyan, in The Evening Star (Washington, D.C.), September 3, 1963, p. A-3.
- ⁶⁰Ibid
- ⁶¹John C. Donnell, "Personalism in Viet-Nam," in Wesley Fisher (ed.), Problems of Freedom in Viet-Nam (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1961).
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- ⁶⁹Warner, The Last Confucian, pp. 129-130; Col. H.C.B. Cook, "Shaky Dike Against a Red Flood," Bangkok Post, March 15, 1962.
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- ⁷¹Ibid., p. 369.
- ⁷²Ibid., p. 362.
- ⁷³Warner, The Last Confucian, pp. 127-128, 132-133, 136.
- ⁷⁴Ibid., p. 210. It was badly mauled in the VC attack of May 1965.
- ⁷⁵Fall, The Two Viet-Nams, pp. 329-330.
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- ⁷⁷John G. Norris, "Steep Buildup of U.S. Power in Viet Shown," The Washington Post February 7, 1965, p. E-3.

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⁸⁰Montgomery, The Politics of Foreign Aid.

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⁸⁷U.S. Operations Mission (AID), Public Safety Division, National Identification Card Program (Saigon: 15 August 1963).

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Part Four
POSTWAR COUNTERINSURGENT
VICTORIES

BURMA (1948-1960)

INDONESIA (1958-1961)

MALAYA (1948-1960)

THE PHILIPPINES (1946-1954)

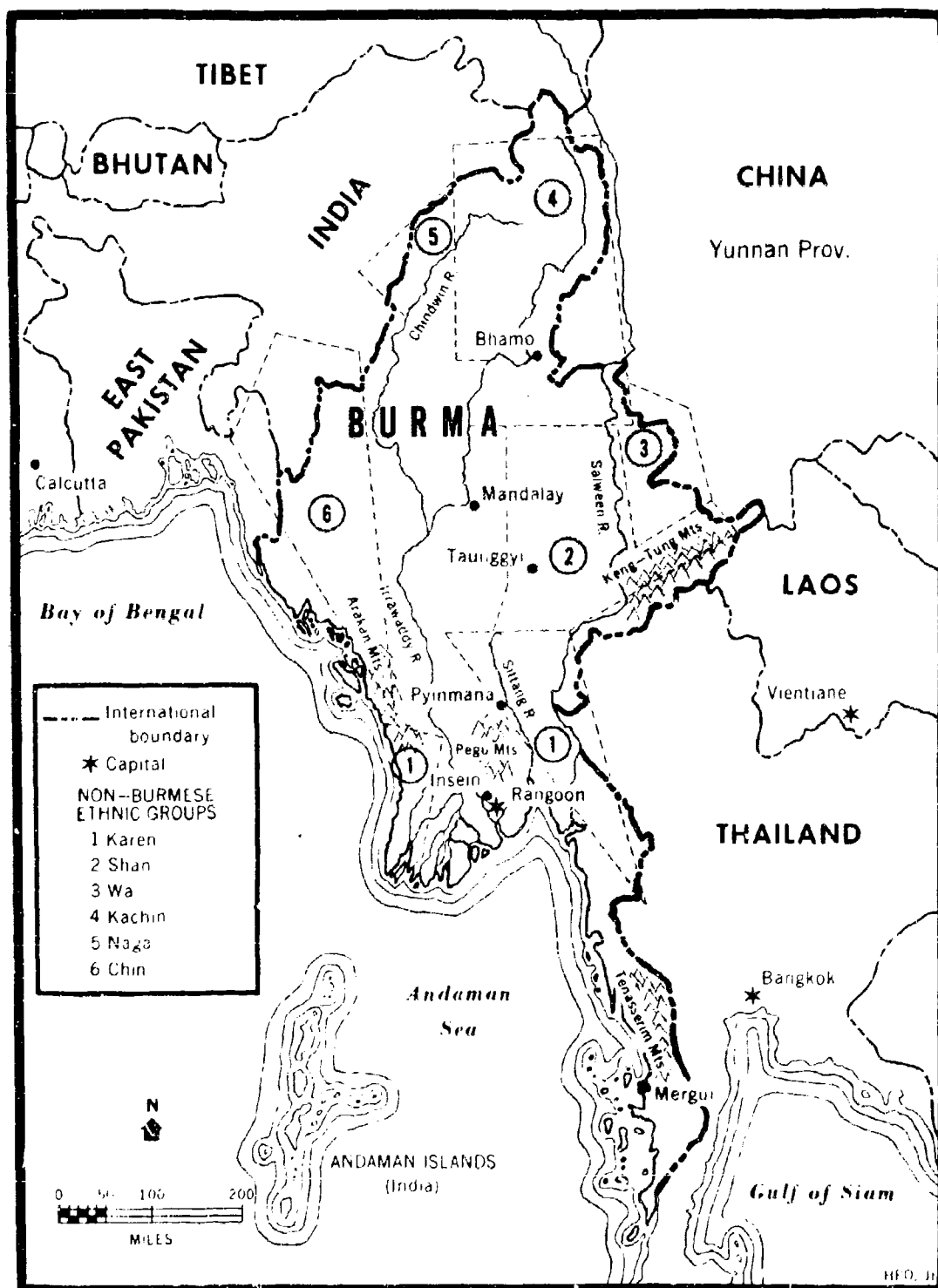
SOUTH KOREA (1948-1954)

TIBET (1951-1960)

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**BURMA
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BURMA (1948-1960)

by William C. Johnstone

The newly independent government of Burma faced in 1948 a continuing insurgent movement that included both minority ethnic groups and Communists; since then communist insurgency has been sporadically successful, although there is as yet no evidence of a conclusive end to the struggle.

BACKGROUND

At the moment of independence in January 1948, Burma had not yet recovered from the ravages of World War II; whatever economic development had taken place during some 50 years of British rule had been literally wrecked by the war. With great actual and potential natural resources and an area about the size of Texas, under ordinary circumstances Burma could probably have supported twice its 1948 population of somewhat over 18.5 million persons.*

Most of the Burmese-speaking part of the population, some 15 million persons, are based in the agriculturally productive delta and the north-south river valleys of the Chindwin, the Irrawaddy, and the Sittang. Approximately 3.5 to 4 million non-Burmese-speaking people live in the hills and mountains surrounding the main river valleys. In culture, these minority peoples range all the way from the primitive Nagas in the northwest and many tribal groups in the mountains on the east to the civilized Karens of lower Burma. All these minority groups share a common antipathy to the majority Burmese, who attempted to rule them before the British came in the 19th century, and all of them feared Burmese dominance after independence in 1948.

The Shan peoples of the eastern highlands (nearly one million) are ethnically and linguistically related to the Thai peoples. Generally successful in resisting Burmese domination, the Shan maintained their feudal system under the British, who administered their area separately from Burma proper. They suffered less from the Japanese occupation than most of the population and were able to retain their own customs.

In the north and northwest along the Chinese and Indian borders live a variety of tribal groups, including the Wa, the Nagas, and some 250,000 Kachins. These are transborder tribes

*For a description of Burma's geography and climate, see ch. 5, "Burma (1942-1945)."

who traditionally moved freely across the undefined China-Burma border until the establishment of the Chinese Communist regime in 1949. The Kachins, like the other minorities, disliked and feared the Burmese majority. During the war, their sense of independence was increased by the presence in their region of American and other Allied forces who trained some 10,000 Kachins in guerrilla tactics for use against the Japanese.

The largest minority of over one million Karens is divided between the less civilized tribal groups in the mountainous region east of the Sittang River and along the Tenasserim coast and the more civilized Karens who have filtered into lower Burma, mixing with the Burmese population but maintaining their separate identity and customs. During World War II, the Karens suffered severely at the hands of both the Japanese and Burmese. The postwar independence of Burma deprived them of their British protectors and left them, as it did the other minority groups, with misgivings as to their future under a Burma government dominated by the Burmese.

Problems Facing Burma on Independence

Burma has had a long history of internecine wars and violence. Even during the British period before World War II, Burma was said to have had the highest rate of violent crimes of any province within the British Empire. During the four years of Japanese occupation from 1941 to 1945, habits of obedience to law and order broke down even more. After the Japanese surrender in 1945, the interim British government in 1945-47 made only feeble efforts to collect and guard the large stocks of leftover weapons and ammunition. At the time of independence in January 1948, arms and ammunition could still be easily obtained for almost any purpose.¹

When the newly independent Burma government decided against remaining within the British Commonwealth, British rehabilitation efforts, never very extensive, were virtually halted. Physical damages in the war-torn country were over \$2 billion; in addition, over \$1 billion in goods and services had been taken by the Japanese in exchange for worthless occupation currency. Over two million acres of rice paddy land had reverted to jungle during the war, and in 1946-47 Burma's gross national product was still 40 percent less than in 1938-39. Mining, oil production, and timbering had been virtually stopped. In 1947-48, great numbers of Burmese were unemployed, either roaming the countryside as marauders or hiding as refugees in the few major towns and cities. Near-starvation existed in many parts of the country, and consumer goods were unavailable because of the almost total destruction of road and water transport. In short, the new government's task of rehabilitation was enormous, and the stage was set for lawlessness and insurgency.²

Government and Politics Up to 1948

Burma's political party system had its roots in the immediate past. In the prewar period of 1935-41, Burma had been a semi-self-governing British colony. Then in 1943, the Japanese created an "independent" Burma government under Dr. Ba Maw. Growing resistance to

Japanese occupation eventually led to the creation of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL). Under the leadership of Gen. Aung San, this Burmese organization furthered plans for anti-Japanese resistance in the closing months of the war, but its leaders were interested primarily in a postwar drive for independence from Britain. During the period of the interim British government in 1945-47, the British Governor appointed AFPFL head Aung San as deputy chairman of the Governor's Council—in what is often referred to as the "interim Burmese government." In the 1947 elections for the constituent assembly which was to frame an independent government for Burma, AFPFL candidates won almost two-thirds of the seats.³

The AFPFL Coalition Is Beset by Party Politics

The AFPFL was not a political party in the Western sense. Rather, it was a coalition of political organizations held together by the aim of independence and the promise of full achievement of self-government. In the postwar period of 1946-48, the AFPFL included Communists, Socialists, the People's Volunteer Organization (PVO), and various minority political groups.

The Communists had two strong leaders: Thakin Soe, a fanatical, stubborn, doctrinaire man of limited ability; and Thakin Than Tun, an intelligent conspirator with real administrative skills. Early in 1946, a controversy within the ranks of the Communists caused a complete split between these two leaders and led to the formation under Thakin Soe of the Communist Party of Burma (CPB), whose members were known as the "Red Flag" Communists. Thakin Soe and a small group of several hundred followers went underground to begin armed insurrection against the interim government. The Red Flags were officially outlawed by the government in July 1946. However, the greater number of Communists still remained in the open as the Burmese Communist Party (BCP) under the leadership of Thakin Than Tun and were popularly known as the "White Flag" Communists. During the war, Thakin Than Tun had taken advantage of his position in the AFPFL and of anti-Japanese sentiment in Burma to organize his Communist Party down to the local level. After the split with the Red Flags, Than Tun retained control of the Communist apparatus in the districts of Burma proper⁴ and remained within the AFPFL coalition. However, by October 1946, Communist activities in the AFPFL had been severely curtailed, the BCP had been excluded from the AFPFL council, and Than Tun had resigned as AFPFL general secretary. Communists could remain in the AFPFL only as individuals.

The Socialists were led by U Ba Swe and U Kyaw Nyein, who were largely responsible for developing mass organizations among the workers and peasants. After the exclusion of the Communist Party from the AFPFL and of individual Communists from positions of leadership, the Socialists were able to elect Nyein as general secretary of the AFPFL, and somewhat later this party became the dominant group in the AFPFL for a decade.

The PVO was created in 1946-47 by Gen. Aung San as a paramilitary organization. It was initially composed of 6,000 to 7,000 partially trained soldiers who had not been accepted into the new regular Burma Army and was designed to be a military force for use against the British if Aung San's demands for a negotiated independence failed. It quickly became a political organization with local units and district headquarters and accepted some 5,000 to 10,000 volunteers in Burma proper. The PVO wanted a coalition Burmese government in which the Burmese Communist Party (White Flags) would have a role, but these aims were unacceptable to the Socialists. The PVOs, like the Communists, were apparently disgruntled when, contrary to their expectations, the British granted independence to Burma without an armed struggle—a struggle which both had been preparing to wage and expected to be necessary.

Unfortunately for Burma's future, Gen. Aung San, head of PVO and the AFPFL and temporary head of the interim Burma government, was, together with leading members of his cabinet, assassinated on July 19, 1947.⁵ Aung San's place was taken by U Nu (Thakin Nu),⁶ but as president of the AFPFL, U Nu refused to join any of its constituent groups, including the PVO.⁷ He was thus never to be in a position to control the course of the PVO, to moderate its political demands, or to make its leadership listen to reason.

U Nu's Government Is Unable To Prevent Insurgency

The independent Burma government of 1948 was modeled on the British system, with a lower house (Chamber of Deputies) elected by popular vote and an upper house (Chamber of Nationalities) designed to provide some voice, but little power, for the various minority peoples. The president of Burma was the head of state; but the chief executive, as in Britain, was the prime minister. He and his cabinet were members of parliament and could be voted out of office.

When U Nu became the first Prime Minister of independent Burma in January 1948, his government faced two major problems. The first was to restore law and order and to rehabilitate the economy, the second was to maintain unity among the constituent political groups within the AFPFL. The resolution of either of these problems depended upon success in solving the other. If the AFPFL parties could not work together in the government, or if they went into opposition to U Nu, his government could not effectively restore internal order or rescue the economy. If no real progress were made in these objectives, the AFPFL might lose its support base, which, in turn, might cause the government to collapse. A strong central government was needed to cope with the complex problems facing the country.⁸

Unfortunately for U Nu, his government was based on a coalition of AFPFL parties whose aims were often either mutually antagonistic or antagonistic to those of the government. Furthermore, the role of the Communists in Burma was ambiguous, since postwar international Communist aims in Asia had not yet been solidified. Not until the spring of 1948 was the Soviet line

reformulated and the decision made in Moscow to support armed violence by the Asian Communist parties against the newly independent governments, under the claim that real independence could be achieved only after all vestiges of "colonialist-imperialist" influence had been removed.⁸ Both Thakin Than Tun with his White Flag associates and Thakin Soe with his already rebellious Red Flag group violently opposed two items in the agreements with Britain for Burma's independence: payment of compensation for nationalized British property, and provision for a small British military training mission after independence. To the Communists, these were evidences of the lack of real independence.

In the first four months of 1948, U Nu spent most of his time trying to heal the growing rift between the Communists and the Socialists and trying to mollify the PVO and other groups in the AFPFL. The real struggle within the AFPFL was over political control of the government and patronage. There were too few high-level positions and too many rival political leaders with both strong individual and mass support for U Nu to satisfy everyone.¹⁰

Economic disruption, mass unemployment, the breakdown of law and order, and bitter rivalry among the major groups within the new AFPFL government were all factors that contributed to the growing unrest, disillusionment, and frustration throughout the country.

INSURGENCY

During the fall of 1947 and the first months of 1948, while U Nu was desperately trying to hold his AFPFL coalition together in the face of mounting disorder and incipient insurgency, Red Flag Communist rebels were joined by armed civilian dissidents who worked with them sporadically in hope of plunder and loot. It was U Nu's failure to mollify Than Tun and his White Flag followers in the Burmese Communist Party immediately after independence in 1948, however, which touched off a chain reaction of unrest leading to large-scale insurgency.

Than Tun was only willing to settle for key posts in the U Nu government. Believing that he could obtain large popular support, Than Tun and his associates made personal attacks on the U Nu government and the Burmese Socialists. In March 1948, Than Tun and the hard-core members of the Burmese Communist Party held a huge mass rally in Pyinmana, at which the Communists promised free land and no taxes and called for a people's struggle. The rally was attended by some 75,000 persons who apparently came chiefly for the spectacle. Encouraged now to believe that he could overthrow the government by force, Than Tun ordered large-scale armed insurrection.¹¹ By the end of March 1948, the White Flags were in open revolt.

PVO and Army Units Join the Communist Insurgencies

In the summer of 1948, nearly 10,000 members of the pro-Communist People's Volunteer Organization, 6,000 of whom had had some training as a paramilitary force, went into insurgency.

The PVOs were soon organized along military lines with a general headquarters in Rangoon and small headquarters units in the towns of central Burma. They too had their sympathizers. Bo Hmu Aung and Bo Tun Hla acted as their principal advocates and negotiators in Rangoon.¹²

In addition, two battalions of the Regular Burma Army mutinied and joined the Communist and PVO insurgents. Among them, these groups held most of central Burma and the main arteries of road and water transportation. Between July and December 1948, the various insurgent groups comprised 15,000 to 20,000 armed men, organized into relatively small units of platoon and company strength. Divided among Red Flag Communists, White Flag Communists, and the PVOs, they were plagued by factional quarrels, bickering over command control, and competition for cash, supplies, and weapons. For these reasons, the insurgents were never able to mobilize sufficient strength to capture Rangoon and control of the government. They were able to dominate Burma proper, however, and to bring the economy of the country to a virtual standstill.¹³ Although the Burma Army had been able by January 1949 to make some progress toward preventing large concentrations of armed insurgents and regaining some control in the major cities, another setback for U Nu occurred in this month—the Karens, Burma's largest minority group, also turned against the government.

The Karens Also Rebel

Disgruntled at the failure of negotiations with U Nu for a separate Karen state within the Union of Burma, a large militant group of Karens with capable leaders opted for armed insurrection. The core of the Karen insurgents was the Karen National Defense Organization (KNDO), a paramilitary force organized in 1947 to protect Karens from lawless Burmese and Communist attacks. The KNDO core consisted of some 5,000 Karens who had received training in guerrilla warfare from British officers during World War II. They were joined by a number of Karen officers and almost two-thirds of the men of two Karen battalions in the Regular Burma Army, who deserted to them.¹⁴ For nearly six months in 1949, the KNDO held control of the Aklone and Insein districts near the capital city of Rangoon and dominated the lower delta area and many parts of the countryside east of the capital and south to Mergui. "Among all the insurgents," wrote U Nu, "the KNDOs were the most formidable and their rebellion put the Government into unprecedented straits."¹⁵

Only U Nu's strenuous efforts at negotiations with the Karens, internal differences among Karen leaders, and, above all, the inability of the KNDOs and the other insurgent forces to agree on common strategy and tactics for large-scale operations saved the Burma government from defeat and disintegration. After July 1949, the insurgents lost their hold on the major cities and towns and were seldom able to operate in bands of more than 200 to 300 men.¹⁶ From March 1948 until well into 1950, however, the insurgency posed a real threat to the security of the Burma government and endangered its continued existence.

Lack of External Aid

During this period (1948-50), the government constantly feared the possibility of substantial external Communist assistance to Burmese Communist insurgents. There is no evidence, however, that they received any money, arms, agents, or logistics aid from Moscow. Apart from advice from Peking and the acceptance of between 50 and 100 Burmese for training in Communist China, apparently no substantial aid was given by the Communist bloc or other outside sources. It should be noted that, between 1950 and 1954, Communist China was involved in the Korean war and, from 1954 to 1960, the Peking regime was posing as a peaceful friend of Burma.*

The Insurgent Political Offensive Is Fragmented

The insurgents operated on two levels, military and political. The political offensive was mounted by the nonmilitary supporters possessed by each insurgent group in Rangoon and other major cities and towns. These followers of the Communists, the PVOs, and the KNDs, served in a variety of ways—as intelligence and counterintelligence agents, as organizers and leaders of local groups affiliated with the different insurgent organizations, and, most importantly, as channels of communication to the government and as advocates of the various insurgent causes.

The political aims of the insurgent groups varied considerably. The Red Flags of Thakin Soe were doctrinaire and often called Trotskyites; they wanted to overthrow the government by force and to establish a Communist state on doctrinaire lines. Thakin Soe refused to join other insurgent leaders in any kind of common political strategy, and most of his followers came from lawless elements interested in personal aggrandizement. Their constant resort to terrorism, kidnaping, and intimidation alienated even would-be Communist sympathizers. At one time or another, the Red Flags waged pitched battle with every other insurgent group, as well as with the Burma Army.

The chief political menace to U Nu's government came from Thakin Thiri Tin's White Flag Communists, who wanted immediate recognition and active participation as a party within a coalition Burmese government. The White Flags were organized along orthodox lines, with a Politburo and a Central Executive Committee, and had the assistance of many sympathizers, Thiri Pe (Myint), Thakin Chit, and Kodaw Hmaing being the principal intermediaries with the U Nu government. The White Flag Communists maintained contact with the Indian Communist

*The refugee Kuomintang troops who entered Burma in 1949-50 from Yunnan and settled in northeastern Keng Tung Province are not considered insurgents. These troops, some 6,000 men, were supplied by the Kuomintang government from Formosa; however, their purpose was not to overthrow the Burma government but to reconquer China. Approximately half were airlifted out of Burma by international agreement and those who remained settled down in Keng Tung as squatters. Many of them joined with small insurgent groups from time to time, but only for purposes of looting and plunder.

Party through H. M. Goshal, a Burma-born Indian. In late 1948 or early 1950, Than Tun sent two members of his Central Executive Committee, Bo Aung Gyi and Po Thein Swe, to Peking to seek guidance from the Chinese Communists. As a result of Chinese advice, Than Tun announced the formation of a United Democratic Front to include the Red Flags, the PVOs, and the Karens.

Thakin See refused to follow the leadership of the White Flags, and the PVOs, although pro Communist in policy, refused to accept Communist domination in practice. The Regular Army mutineers were also unwilling to operate under Communist direction. Meanwhile, little came from Peking except advice, often conflicting, and continuing rivalry among insurgent leaders, as well as a steady attrition inflicted by the Burma Army, sapped Communist strength.¹⁸

The militant KNDO had the advantage of a single, simple aim—a Karen state. Although the Karens briefly cooperated with Than Tun, their antagonism toward the Burmese in general and their dislike of communism in particular made anything beyond local military cooperation with either the White Flags or the PVOs impossible. The less militant Karen leaders occupied positions of respect in the Rangoon community and served not only as advocates of the Karen cause but also as intermediaries in diminishing the extent and strength of the KNDO insurgency.¹⁹

The Insurgents Lack a Concerted Military Strategy

The military aspect of the insurgency presented almost as confused a picture as the political. The five insurgent groups operating in Burma proper—the Red Flag Communists, the White Flag Communists, the PVOs, the mutineers from the Regular Burma Army, and the KNDOs—were organized into platoons and companies along British Army lines, but only infrequently did more than three companies group together for a single operation. A concerted strategy proved impossible, not only because of bitter rivalry at all levels, but also because thousands of unemployed Burmese and Karens joined the local insurgent groups whenever chances to loot or plunder appeared. This accretion of drifters and riffraff handicapped more than it helped the insurgent leadership.²⁰

Since the Burma Army was small and the government unsure of the loyalty of its units, it was relatively easy during 1948 and 1949 for the various insurgent groups to mount attacks on government forces, to take and hold towns, to raid government subtreasuries and supply and munitions dumps, and to dominate the countryside generally. In the period from January to July 1949, the number of armed insurgents in all groups was estimated by the Burma government to have exceeded 20,000, and there were probably another 15,000 to 20,000 dissident civilians who possessed weapons and who joined up with local insurgent groups from time to time for raids and looting.

Insurgent Strength Wanes

The internal difficulties of the insurgents finally enabled the U Nu government to control and contain, if not to eliminate, them. After 1950, the insurgent groups, reduced by casualties and desertion, were an irritant rather than a major threat to the government. Where there was insufficient force to disband them, the insurgents created only local and sporadic disorder. By 1951, the Burma government had reestablished its authority over 90 percent of its territory. The PVO insurgents were largely dispersed and substantial numbers of them surrendered. Although the two Communist groups and the KNDO continued to maintain their separate existence, they were in greatly reduced strength. The Communists were pushed west of the Irrawaddy in to the lower Chindwin district, and the KNDO was driven into the hills east of the Sitang River and into the southern Shan plateau.

Nonetheless, the insurgency continued, a thorn in the side of the government and always a potential threat to its stability. Despite continuing counterinsurgency efforts, there were still approximately 5,000 insurgents at large in September 1958. After an intensive counterinsurgency drive between September 1958 and April 1960, this number was further reduced to between 2,000 and 2,500.²¹

COUNTERINSURGENCY

In describing the Burmese government's counterinsurgency, it is useful to keep in mind three time periods: 1948-50, 1950-58, and 1958-60. Between March 1948 and the spring of 1950, the major effort of the government was military. It was aimed, first, at reducing the very real threat of insurgent forces' capturing Rangoon and overthrowing the government and, second, at breaking the hold of the insurgents over large sections of the countryside and the main arteries of transportation.

By the spring of 1950, these minimum aims had been substantially achieved, and insurgent strength had been so reduced and dispersed as to allow the government to begin mopping up small insurgent forces and to attempt to gain more general support from the populace. By 1952, the government was able to proceed with its programs for economic and social development. However, the insurgency was not ended in this second period between early 1950 and September 1958. Raids on towns and villages continued, trucks and busses on the highways were ambushed, railway trains derailed, and rail and highway bridges blown up with disconcerting regularity. People and goods moved throughout the country, but with little security.

It was only after U Nu handed over the prime ministership to Gen. Ne Win, in September 1958, that real progress against the insurgents was made. Under a mandate to restore law and order within a fixed time (18 months as it turned out) in order that free and safe elections might be held, Gen. Ne Win's military caretaker government moved vigorously against the remnants of the insurgents in a campaign that was largely successful.

Insurgency—Only One of Many Problems

It should be kept in mind that during the whole period from 1945 to 1960 the Burma government was struggling with a great many problems besides that of insurgency. It had to arrange its foreign affairs and its diplomatic representation abroad and at the United Nations; it had to decide how fast and in what ways it would proceed toward its Socialist goals; it had to bring paddy land back into production, since rice export was the chief source of foreign exchange and essential for purchasing the materials and equipment needed for economic development; and it had to keep together the loose AFPFL political coalition as the mainstay of the government.²²

The unrest and disorder facing the new Burma government of U Nu in 1948 were enough to discourage any political leader. When the White Flag Communists were joined by the PVO's and members of local village defense units (the sitwundans), and when nearly two full battalions of the Burma Army mutinied to join the insurgents, there were many prophets of despair. U Nu was unsure of the loyalty of the remaining units of the Regular Army of approximately 12,000 men, and the Union Auxiliary Military Police force of some 3,000 partly trained men was considered even less reliable. In the first part of 1949, conditions deteriorated even further when the KNDUs began their armed insurrection.

External Aid for the Government

Although the U Nu government was facing formidable odds, at the same time it had certain advantages. So long as the government could maintain itself in Rangoon, it had access by air and sea to the outside world from which various kinds of assistance might be obtained. External aid for the counterinsurgent forces of the Burma government was, however, modest. At the height of the insurgency in 1949, the British provided the hard-pressed Burma Army with 10,000 rifles and ammunition; and, during the army's rapid enlargement between 1948 and 1952, a small British Military Advisory Mission was of considerable help. The major assistance given Burma was in the form of a commonwealth loan authorized by the Asian members of the British Commonwealth and Great Britain. This loan strengthened Burma's foreign exchange position and enabled the government to purchase weapons, military equipment, and transport from abroad. After 1952, there appeared to be no need of foreign assistance for purely military counterinsurgent activities. Between 1956 and 1960, the United States sent a few U.S. Army officers to help, particularly in the establishment of a staff college and a new Armed Services Academy for officer training.

The Government Prepares for Military Action First

It is against this background that the three levels of action undertaken by the Burmese government must be discussed. The first and most obvious need was for military action against the armed insurrectionists. The second was political warfare—combining offers of amnesty,

negotiations, and psychological warfare with efforts directed toward winning the support of the people away from insurgent groups. The third was the rehabilitation of surrendered insurgents.

In preparation for the forthcoming contest, the Burma government did not stint its support for the army. A large-scale recruitment and training program was begun as early as the fall of 1948. Defense expenditures were substantially increased to provide the army with new weapons, transport, and communications equipment. Fortunately, the army retained a core of professionally trained officers and men whose primary loyalty was to their new nation and U Nu's government. Army recruits came from all over Burma proper, its officers were familiar with the terrain over which they had to fight, and its firepower was generally superior in local engagements.

In addition, the Burma Army set about developing an intelligence and counterintelligence network which grew more effective as fighting experience was gained. Using loyal peasants in the villages, local officials, and the more well-to-do members of the populace who stood to suffer most from the insurgents and making maximum use of limited communications equipment, the army had information as good as and perhaps better than the insurgents'. Effective use was also made of the dozen or so planes possessed by the government's embryonic air force and the Union of Burma Airways. Through information gained by aerial reconnaissance, the Burma Army was able to prevent an insurgent attempt in early 1949 to combine White Flag, PVO, and KNDO forces for a march on the capital.

By the beginning of 1950, the morale of the Burma Army was good, and trained recruits were beginning to swell its ranks. Professional military leadership, superior organization, and good communications and equipment gave the army a considerable advantage over the not-so-well equipped, poorly organized, and largely uncoordinated insurgent forces.

The Army Secures Major Towns and Transport Lines

The army's first task was to recapture the principal cities and towns held by the insurgents in Burma proper, particularly along the main transport lines. This was a clear-and-hold operation involving many fire fights, as well as a number of pitched battles against insurgent forces of several hundred men. Considerable progress had already been made when the KNDOs joined the Communists and PVOs in armed insurrection against the government in January 1949. Gains made during the latter part of 1948 were, however, more than lost in the first six months of 1949.²³ Nevertheless, profiting from insurgent weaknesses and drawing on its previous experience, the Burma Army recaptured the main towns in Burma proper and made the principal routes of transportation reasonably secure by the beginning of 1950.²⁴

In 1950 and 1951, the army continued its drives against the insurgent groups dispersed to the west along the Irrawaddy River and to the east across the Sittang River. As the army increased in strength, small units were stationed in the principal cities and towns and along the

... *effectiveness of transportation*... In addition, units of the army reorganized and trained local village defense forces, so that they were able to guard stocks of weapons, equipment, and supplies. Armed guards also conveyed the trucks that carried consumer goods up-country and returned to Rangoon with rice and other products. Some progress was made in protecting river traffic, the main way of transporting rice to Rangoon for export.

Political Warfare—Regaining Popular Support

After 1950, the task of the Burma Army as a counterinsurgent force was made easier by two facts. First, the Burmese peasants and particularly the more well-to-do cultivators and merchants in the villages and towns became thoroughly tired of constant intimidation, looting, and raiding, and turned to the army for protection. Second, the efforts of the Burma government to stabilize the economy, repair wartime damage, and rehabilitate the agricultural sector of the economy began to bear fruit, thus winning popular support for the counterinsurgents. By the beginning of 1952, the military situation was well enough in hand so that government officials could carry out their functions in country districts and the government could proceed with projects for economic development. Security was not complete, but the insurgency had been reduced to sporadic raids, occasional sabotage, and scattered episodes of terrorism.

The government now began a more intensive campaign of counterinsurgency at the political level. From time to time between 1952 and the beginning of 1958, the still legitimate supporters of the insurgent groups urged on the U Nu government various formulas of amnesty, to induce insurgents to surrender. The government was willing to offer amnesty and restore citizenship to the insurgents only if they would surrender with their arms. Between 1953 and 1958, certain individuals and small groups, reported by the Burma Army to have numbered over 3,000, accepted the offers. The bulk of the surrenders came from the ranks of the PVO and KNDO. The hard-core leadership of the Burmese Communist Party insisted on legalization of the party and incorporation of its armed forces into the Regular Burma Army as a prerequisite for laying down arms.

Accompanying the sporadic negotiations and offers of amnesty, the Burmese government and army undertook an intensive psychological warfare campaign designed both to convince the insurgents and their sympathizers that the rebel cause was hopeless, and to convince officials, civil servants, and the general public that the government was stable and making steady progress toward its Socialist welfare objectives. The Department of Education and Psychological Warfare took the campaign to the civilian population. The army, through a special unit of the Defense Services Institute, undertook the main effort, which was directed at army personnel, local defense units, and the insurgents themselves. Over 700,000 pamphlets were prepared by the Defense Services Institute; radio, public speeches, and jeep-mounted loudspeakers were also extensively used to get across the government's message.

The success of the government in expanding mass education, in assisting cultivators to get paddy land back into production, in expanding distribution of consumer goods, and in pursuing other visible measures of the economic development program, solidly reinforced the propaganda campaign. In a relatively short time, it was obvious in most parts of the country that the insurgents could offer almost nothing to the population that the government was not already doing more effectively.²⁵

Rehabilitation of Former Insurgents

In 1955, the government began a drive to secure more surrenders, offering liberal amnesty terms and the promise of rehabilitation as citizens. The army organized those insurgents who surrendered into "Rehabilitation Brigades." Former insurgents were housed with their families in specially constructed camps where they were well fed and clothed and given instruction in simple skills and trades for from four to six months. These Rehabilitation Brigades were then used on a variety of government construction projects; after 12 to 18 months, the men and their families were returned to their home villages and helped to begin useful occupations.

The growing number of surrenders after 1955 and the limited data available suggest that this rehabilitation effort had a considerable degree of success as an inducement to surrender. No evidence is available, however, to indicate the percentage of ex-insurgents who remained law-abiding citizens after their return to home villages. There is some evidence, in fact, that insurgent forces, particularly the Communists, maintained contact with these ex-insurgents, continued to indoctrinate them in Communist propaganda, and considered them a core of supporters useful for the future.

In the fall of 1957, press reports indicated an increase in insurgent activity—at least, the number of armed attacks on villages, demolitions of bridges, and robbing of persons on buses in the country increased noticeably. These acts were often attributed to the Communists, PVOs, and KNDOs; but it is more likely that they were committed by bandits who came into the settled areas from hideouts in the surrounding hills and mountains.

The Government's Campaign Falters

Between January and September 1958, both the military and political efforts of the army and the government slackened, as a result of a deteriorating political climate in the country as a whole. U Nu and his closest associates could no longer hold the AFPFL coalition together, and the organization split into two groups. The most cohesive was the Socialist, led by U Ba Swe and U Kyaw Nyein and controlling the largest single bloc of votes in the parliament. U Nu was forced to rely on a number of splinter groups, including the Communist People's Comrade Party and other pro-Communist factions. These leftist groups formed a loose coalition called the National Unity Front (NUF), which only just managed to muster enough votes in parliament to prevent passage of a no-confidence motion against U Nu in June.²⁶

In U Nu's political difficulties the Communist insurgents and their remaining PVO allies saw an opportunity to press their claims for official recognition and complete amnesty. By June, military counterinsurgency had come to a grinding halt and negotiations were being carried on at a frantic pace. It became apparent in August that the U Nu government could not survive another parliamentary test. Fearing civil war, local political leaders in cities and towns and in Rangoon itself vied with each other to secure control of village and town defense units (now called pyasawthas), the local police, and the Union Military Police. These "pocket armies," as well as the existence of an estimated 10,000 armed men in Rangoon on September 1, posed still another threat to the U Nu government.

Ne Win Takes Over

It was under these circumstances that Gen. Ne Win and his colonels staged a bloodless and "constitutional" coup d'état. In late October, a month after U Nu had turned over the reins of government to Ne Win, Parliament elected him Prime Minister. Ne Win agreed to operate a military caretaker government for six months, a period later extended another twelve months by parliament. With a mandate to restore law and order so that free and safe elections could be held, Gen. Ne Win's government had a free hand to deal with insurgents of any kind.

Very quickly, a stepped-up military campaign was instituted, accompanied by increased psychological warfare to encourage surrender. One additional tactic was introduced: the systematic disarmament of civilians in the principal cities and towns. In April 1960 Ne Win could report that over 58,000 rifles with ammunition had been seized, fewer than 4,000 from known insurgents. From the start of the insurgency to June 9, 1958, the Burma War Office stated, 36,733 rebels had surrendered. During the stepped-up counterinsurgency campaign from mid-1958 to 1960, over 7,000 insurgents surrendered—including over 2,000 White Flag Communists, more than 2,000 PVO's, some 500 KNDO's, over 200 Red Flag Communists, and approximately 2,700 "others."²⁷ Except for occasional raids by small insurgent bands, the main arteries of transportation and the major agricultural areas had been made secure. The combined counterinsurgency program of military action, political warfare, and rehabilitation had undoubtedly paid off. The tactic of civilian disarmament in key towns and cities had proved particularly effective.

By early 1960, Gen. Ne Win's efforts had been sufficiently successful for elections to be held in February and March. U Nu's reconstituted political organization, the Union Party (generally called the Pyadaungsu Party), was swept into office by a landslide vote. In April Ne Win handed over the government to its elected representatives, and the army returned to its tasks of defense and internal security.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

When U Nu returned to office in April 1960 as Prime Minister, the insurgency no longer caused the government much concern. It should be noted, however, that some 5,000 armed insurgents remained free and both Thakin Soe, the Red Flag leader, and Thakin Than Tun, the White Flag leader, had escaped capture, as had their chief lieutenants. Although a settlement was arranged providing for a Karen state, it was far less than the Karens had demanded. While many of the Karen leaders had surrendered, been captured, or been killed, a handful more still operated with small bands in the hills and mountains east of the Sittang River. The largest number of surrenders were from the ranks of the PVO, several of their underground leaders were pardoned and joined in the activities of the People's Comrade Party and several other small political groups, all Communist oriented.

No political settlement had been reached with the Communists, who still had many supporters in the various factions making up the National Unity Front, which constituted an opposition group to the U Nu government after 1960. Lack of a satisfactory political settlement with the principal insurgent groups, which were allowed to maintain their headquarters without too much molestation, was a potential threat to the government. Yet this did not seem to give U Nu and his associates any real concern during 1960 and 1961.

Economic and Social Consequences

The economic consequences of the insurgency were severe. Damage to public and private property was estimated at \$100 million. U Nu asserted that there were 30,000 military and civilian casualties (killed, wounded, and missing) between 1948 and 1951. The nearly one million refugees who had flooded into Rangoon and other cities created a most difficult problem of resettlement. Agricultural, mining, and timber production had fallen far short of expectations. Altogether, the period of insurgency held back the economy of Burma and retarded economic progress until after 1954. Counterinsurgency measures contributed little to the economy of the country until a gradual restoration of law and order enabled the government to proceed with its plans for agricultural, industrial, and transport development. One result of the counterinsurgency was the expansion of the Burma Army from a force of approximately 15,000 in 1948 to one of 150,000 in 1960.²⁸

The most important consequences of the insurgency were social and psychological. Japanese occupation had disrupted the Burmese social order and encouraged lawless elements to resort to violence. Many Burmese, nevertheless, had regarded this period as temporary and fully expected that internal order would be restored when World War II ended. The brief period

or British postwar rule did not permit this, but, when agreement was reached in 1947 for a peaceful transfer of power to an independent Burma government, the Burmese assumed their own government would be able to run the country and provide for internal security. In 1948, there was more fear of foreign intervention than of internal disorder.

The insurgency of 1948-60 thus caught the government and the people unprepared, and for two years no one was sure if the new government could bring it to an end. Unlike the resistance to the Japanese occupation, the postwar insurgency involved Burmese fighting Burmese, with some of the Karens loyal and some in rebellion. A new element on the Burmese scene was the tendency of local political leaders and even local officials, as well as national leaders, to arm their political followers—thus developed the "pocket armies." Undoubtedly, many loyal Burmese could see little difference between the open and known pocket armies of the politicians and the armed units of the underground insurgents. Armed action, violence, and intimidation for political ends became common and even accepted features of Burmese life.

A Weak Government Leads to Renewed Insurgency

The U Nu government, duly elected in April 1960, thus inherited a more secure country than it had left in September 1958, but it still had to overcome the social and psychological consequences of the insurgency. Burmese politics had become largely the politics of personal leadership, factionalism, and political action for personal power or gain. The second U Nu government, which held power for only two years, seemed unable to counteract this tendency. It was not long before U Nu's Pyadaungsu Party was split into factions much like the AFPFL in 1958. Communists and their sympathizers took every opportunity to advance their cause and weaken U Nu.

By February 1961, the War Office reported that the strength of armed insurgent groups was again nearly 10,000: 1,610 White Flag Communists, 690 Red Flag Communists, 4,100 Karens, 2,900 Shans, and several hundred others.²⁹ The significant increase was in the Shan and Karen minority groups, evidence of the growing discontent of these and other minorities with the Burmese government, which they believed to be neglecting their interests and discriminating against them. In February 1962, the minority groups, meeting in Taunggyi, the southern Shan capital, made specific demands and evidenced a growing militancy. In addition, a leftist, pro-Communist group won control of U Nu's Pyadaungsu Party, to the consternation of the non-Communist Socialists and the entire business community. Very little counterinsurgency action was undertaken during the two years of U Nu's government; insurgent groups thus obtained a breathing spell, which they used to regroup and to restock weapons and supplies.

After a Second Coup, Ne Win Negotiates With the Insurgents

Early on March 2, 1962, Gen. Ne Win and the Burma Army took control of the government for a second time, but not by invitation of the civilian leaders on this occasion. The coup was carefully planned, the only casualty being the son of a Shan chieftain. Gen. Ne Win immediately formed a Revolutionary Council, a self-appointed junta to govern the country. Within a short time, over 2,500 politicians had been arrested and either jailed or put under detention. The Burmese Constitution was scrapped, civil courts were abolished, and the Revolutionary Council proclaimed its program of "The Burmese Way to Socialism." Since the 1962 coup, Western influence has been largely eliminated, while Communist bloc influence has increased. Westerners are not welcome in Burma, but Russians, Communist Chinese, and other Red bloc nationals come and go freely.³⁰

During 1963, there were protracted negotiations between the government and the Communist and KNDO insurgents, Ne Win permitting their leaders to come to Rangoon for the meetings. Amnesty offers were of no avail against the intransigent stand taken by the Communists, who apparently believed they could win full legal recognition for their party as well as inclusion en bloc of their armed forces within the Regular Burma Army. When negotiations were broken off in November, the leaders were given safe conduct to return to their underground headquarters. Gen. Ne Win then arrested most of the pro-Communist politicians still at large and announced a new and concerted counterinsurgency campaign.

Whether this campaign will succeed remains an open question at the period of this writing in mid-1964. The growing dissatisfaction of the minorities, as well as of the Burmese, with the arbitrary rule of the military has provided an impetus to a new outbreak of insurgency, including now the Shans and Kachins. It has been reliably reported that, in April 1964, there were over 6,000 Shan insurgents, over 5,000 KNDOs, several thousand organized Kachin insurgents, and an accretion to Communist underground strength of several thousand.

Hypothesis: A Policy of Containment

The situation in Burma illustrates a major problem of counterinsurgency which is not often considered. If Ne Win was generally successful in his counterinsurgency efforts between 1958 and April 1960, why could not the civilian Burma government under U Nu hold the line and at least continue to provide internal order as adequately as the Ne Win caretaker regime? And why, when the army took over for the second time in 1962, didn't it take the same steps to restore internal security as it had done previously?

The answer to these questions is not just the relative inexperience and the considerable inefficiency of the Burma government, civilian or military. It lies in the fabric of Burmese

politics. Evidence of observers and reports appearing continually in the Burmese press suggest an answer in two parts. First, officials and political leaders in the countryside have accommodated themselves to the existence of insurgent groups, just as they accommodated during the war to the Japanese occupation forces. Weapons and other supplies reach the insurgent groups by tacit agreement, under threats of raids, kidnaping, terrorism, and the like. Since both sides profit by such understandings, the task of the army is made much more difficult. Second, and more important, it is quite possible that the Burma Army, as well as local politicians and local officials, may have developed a vested interest in keeping the insurgency going to a modest degree instead of crushing it entirely. Personnel of the Burma Army are well housed; their families are well clothed, well fed, and well cared for. Defense expenditures for the first three years of the insurgency averaged 42 percent of the total annual budget; since then, they have taken between 19 and 32 percent. If the insurgents were totally crushed, internal security might become the function of the police and there would be less justification for a large army.³¹

It is possible, therefore, to conclude that a major consequence of the 1948 insurgency has been to develop among officials and politicians and within the Burma Army itself a vested interest in the continuance of disorder, so long as it does not threaten the existence of the country. In such a situation, many individuals and groups may profit, but the loser is the ordinary cultivator, the ordinary citizen, who asks only to live his life in relative peace and security in a fruitful land.

NOTES

¹F.S.V. Donnison, British Military Occupation in the Far East (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1956), ch. 9.

²Louis J. Walinsky, Economic Development in Burma, 1951-1960 (New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1962), ch. 5.

³Hugh Tinker, The Union of Burma (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), ch. 1.

⁴John F. Cady, A Modern History of Burma (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1958), ch. 16; Richard Butwell, U Nu of Burma (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1963), chs. 6 and 9.

⁵Tinker, Union, ch. 1, Butwell, U Nu, ch. 6.

⁶Butwell, U Nu, chs. 5, 6, 7, and 8.

⁷Ibid.; Maung Maung, Aung San of Burma (The Hague: Martin Nijhoff for Yale University, 1962).

⁸Butwell, U Nu, chs. 6 and 9; William C. Johnstone, Burma's Foreign Policy, A Study in Neutralism (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), ch. 2.

⁹J. H. Brimmell, Communism in South East Asia (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), ch. 16.

¹⁰Brimmell, Communism, ch. 21; Cady, Modern History, ch. 16; Tinker, Union, ch. 1.

¹¹Butwell, U Nu, chs. 9, 10; Cady, Modern History, ch. 27; Frank N. Trager (ed.), Burma (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 1956), III, ch. 20.

¹²Brimmell, Communism, ch. 26.

¹³Trager, Burma, ch. 20.

¹⁴Cady, Modern History, ch. 17.

¹⁵Trager, Burma, ch. 21.

¹⁶Cady, Modern History, ch. 27; Trager, Burma, ch. 20.

¹⁷Ibid.; Brimmell, Communism, ch. 20.

¹⁸Brimmell, Communism, ch. 21.

¹⁹Cady, Modern History, ch. 27.

²⁰Trager, Burma, ch. 20.

²¹Ibid.; Butwell, U Nu, ch. 10.

²²Johnstone, Burma's Foreign Policy, ch. 2, Walinsky, Economic Development, chs. 5, 22.

²³Cady, Modern History, ch. 17; Trager, Burma, ch. 20.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Trager, Burma, chs. 20, 21.

²⁶Johnstone, Burma's Foreign Policy, chs. 2, 5; Walinsky, Economic Development, chs. 5, 22.

²⁷Butwell, U Nu, chs. 10 and 14; Johnstone, Burma's Foreign Policy, chs. 2 and 5.

²⁸Johnstone, Burma's Foreign Policy, ch. 5; Walinsky, Economic Development, ch. 23.

²⁹Butwell, U Nu, ch. 14.

³⁰Ibid., ch. 4; Walinsky, Economic Development, ch. 5.

³¹Walinsky, Economic Development, ch. 5.

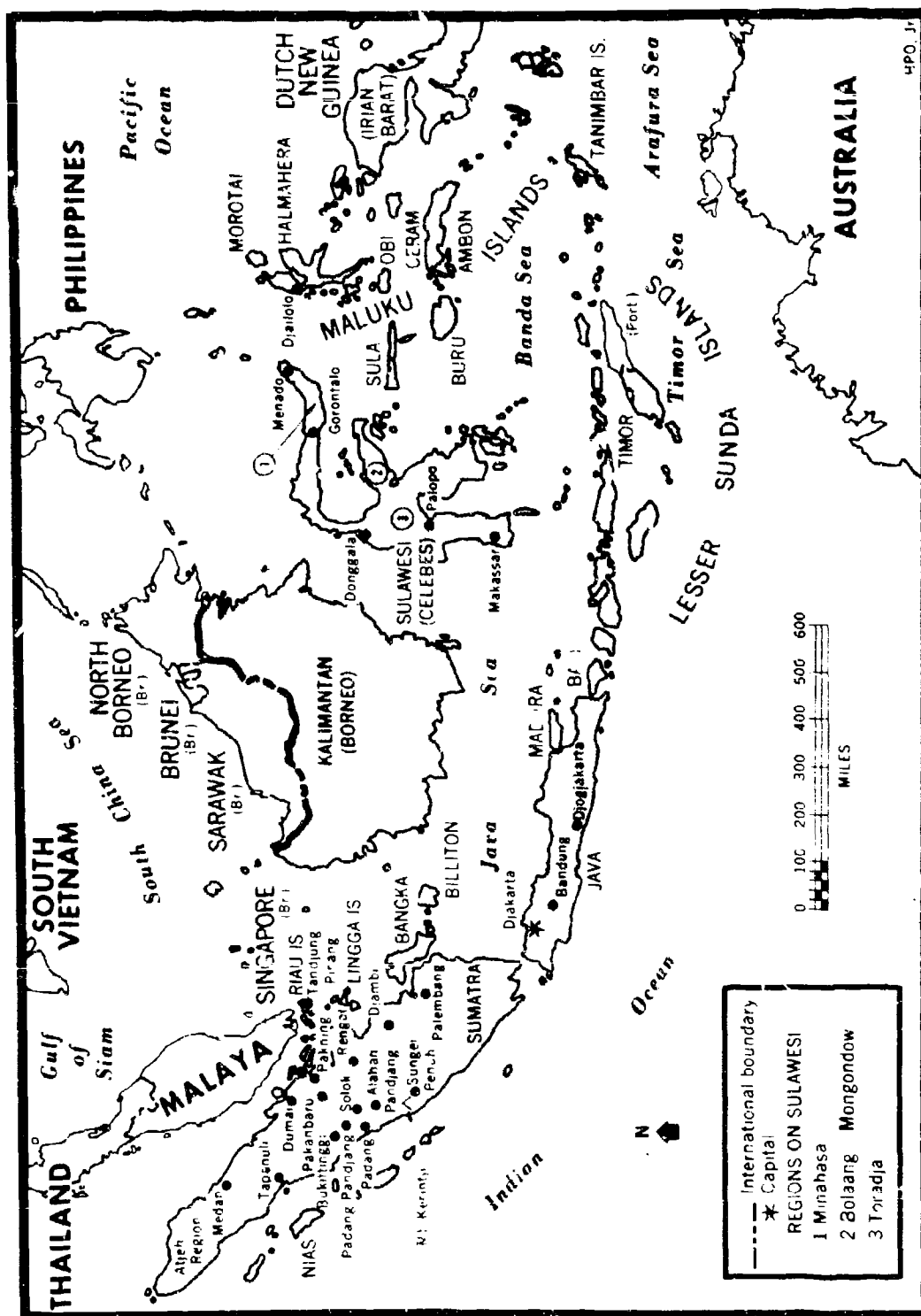
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Chapter Fourteen

INDONESIA 1958-1961

by Genevieve Collins Linebarger



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Confronted by rising political and economic discontent, President Sukarno, supported by the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI), tried to avoid the outbreak of open insurgency; when this failed, he attacked with strong military force, courted public opinion, and offered a safe personal retreat to returning insurgents—a formula that increased the control of the President and the PKI over an impoverished country.

BACKGROUND

The situation in Indonesia between 1958 and 1961 was evocatively described in the titles of two books published in recent years—*Indonesia: Troubled Paradise* and *Rebels in Paradise*.¹ Physical aspects of the country and its tropical climate do indeed invite the comparison to paradise, although Indonesia has been experiencing rebellion and disturbance of one kind or another ever since January 1942, when the Japanese first invaded what was then a Dutch colony. The rebellion of 1958 must be viewed against the background of Japanese occupation and the long postwar struggle for independence against the Dutch,* for in that year the legacy of instability and rebellion turned against the Indonesians themselves.

Areas Affected by the Insurgency

Indonesia's physical terrain has contributed to the duration and form of insurgent activity. From 1958 to 1961, rebel activity was confined to only a few of Indonesia's some 3,000 islands; and most of the fighting took place in the central portions of Sumatra, Sulawesi (Celebes), Maluku (the Moluccas), and western Java.

From 70 to 90 percent of Sumatra is forested and the island is mountainous, especially in the west, where a coral edge and deeply cut mountain streams make approach difficult. Kerintji Mountain in Sumatra (12,461 feet) is still an active volcano, and there are a number of other

*See ch. 10, "Indonesia (1946-1949)."

active, dormant, or extinct volcanoes in the island group. On the eastern side of Sumatra—which is more or less bisected lengthwise by the Barisan mountain range—there is a flat alluvial plain which merges into a forest-covered swamp. Many rivers of the swamp area become unnavigable during the rainy season (October and November north of the equator and December and January south of the equator) because of the formation of deltas up to 12 miles in width.²

In contrast to Sumatra, which is one relatively compact land mass although surrounded by numerous smaller islands, Sulawesi is shaped somewhat like an octopus; so many and narrow are its tentacles, in fact, that early explorers believed it to be an island group rather than a single island. Approximately 73,000 square miles in area, possessing about 3,000 miles of coastline, and with no part farther than 70 miles from the ocean, Sulawesi is nonetheless not readily approachable because of the rocks and coral reefs that almost surround it. The island is mountainous and covered with tropical rain forest, except for some marshy flats which have formed around lakes in the center. Its rivers, though numerous, frequently become unnavigable owing to rapids, waterfalls, and gorges. Sulawesi therefore affords an ideal hiding place for guerrillas, and at the same time the terrain makes conventional army operations difficult. The terrain of Halmahera, where the insurgency of Maluku was concentrated, is quite similar.³

Java, 600 miles long, varies from 60 to 100 miles in width and is dotted with volcanoes which form an east to west axis. There are 44 volcanic cones from 6,000 to 10,000 feet in height and another 14 cones that are still higher. Heavy sulphuric gases generated by volcanoes and sometimes emerging in gas vents frequently make Java's valleys uninhabitable. In western Java, there are two major fertile agricultural areas located in the alluvial Bandung Basin and Garut Basin, formerly volcanic lakes. Although Java's rivers are swift during the October to May rainy season, they tend to become low during the dry season.⁴

Economic Factors Increase Regional Discontent

Indonesia's difficulties have in part been engendered by the very uneven geographical distribution of population in this multi-island group. Of the 97 million population for Indonesia as a whole shown in the 1961 census, 63 million were located in Java and Madura, the small island just off Java's northern coast. The population of Sumatra, on the other hand, was only about 15.7 million and that of Sulawesi a little over 7 million,⁵ despite the fact that these outer islands produced a large share of the goods providing foreign exchange. The rebels on Sumatra and Sulawesi claimed that all of the oil revenue from Central and South Sumatra, amounting to 10 percent of Indonesia's revenue, went to Indonesia's capital Djakarta, located on Java. They also claimed that Sumatra produced most of Indonesia's foreign exchange, and that South Sumatra, which produced 37 percent of all Indonesia's foreign exchange, got in return only 6 percent of the national revenue.⁶

The Indonesian government under President Sukarno denied this contention. It claimed that in interisland trade in 1955 Java supplied Sumatra with almost 4.3 billion rupiah worth of goods, including rice, manufactured sugar, salt, cigarettes, and soap, while Sumatra supplied Java with less than 1.7 billion rupiah worth of salted and dried fish, coffee, palm oil, and petroleum products. The government also claimed that the total export figures for 1956 were 10 billion rupiah in value, of which West Sumatra supplied less than .2 billion, North Sumatra 2 billion, and South Sumatra 3.5 billion. But the government appeared to have overlooked the fact that, even by its own figures, this totaled more than half of the total foreign exchange.

Whatever the facts, the outer regions were definitely dissatisfied at the percentage of foreign exchange which they received. This dissatisfaction, combined with the fact that military commanders of several regions had been given a great amount of power and assumed even more, led to a great deal of illegal barter trade. Rather than send goods to Djakarta and get only a fraction of the foreign exchange, several regions began to send goods directly to Singapore or to the Philippines, where they could receive full value for the goods bartered.⁸

Other Economic Problems

The loss of revenue to the central government engendered by this illegal trade was only one of a number of factors adversely affecting the Indonesian economy. The 1958 budget deficit, originally estimated at Rp. 6.5 billion, was revised upward to Rp. 8 billion.⁹ Rubber production was also falling off considerably. In 1960 the government itself reported that 60 percent of the West Java rubber plantations needed replanting because the trees were old and the yield was poor. This condition affected 42 rubber estates with a combined area of 9,157 hectares. The rubber plantations of the Tasikmalaja area alone had decreased in production from 9,970 tons in 1941 to 3,754 tons in 1959.¹⁰

Indonesia was also faced with rising inflation. In 1951, money circulation was reported as being Rp. 5.03 billion; by 1956, this had risen to Rp. 13.89 billion; and by December 1958, it was reported as being Rp. 29 billion.¹¹ In the meantime, gold and foreign exchange holdings were reported to have decreased from Rp. 2.75 million in December 1955 to Rp. 1.68 million in June 1959. As a result of inflation and of restrictions on imports imposed by the government in an attempt to curb the outflow of gold, price indices of numerous food items moved up considerably. Dr. Sumitro Djojohadikusumo, a leading economist who had been Finance Minister of the Indonesian government before joining the rebel cause, stated that, using December 1956 as 100, the price index by December 1958 for rice was 226, cooking oil 377, wheat flour 274, condensed milk 512, and white beans 321.¹² Dr. Sumitro was admittedly on the side of the rebels, but his figures appeared consonant with the facts. The economic situation seems to have had, at least initially, a bearing on the rebellion of some of the dissident groups.

Ethnic and Religious Differences

Other factors also created a rebellious attitude. After 1953, the people of the outer islands apparently felt an increasing resentment of Javanese "colonialism," believing that the Javanese were favored not only economically but personally. Particularly resentful of what it believed to be favoritism toward the Javanese were the matrilineal Minangkabau of Sumatra, a relatively homogeneous racial and cultural group.¹³ In 1956, ethnic organizations, ostensibly cultural but actually political in nature, were formed among the Minangkabau, Atjehinese, Sundanese, Lampongese, East Sumatrans, and others. An organization was even formed to coordinate the activities of several of these groups: the Front Pemuda Sunda (Sundanese Youth Front).¹⁴

Religious as well as ethnic factors appear to have played a role in engendering resentment among various Muslim and Christian groups. Darul Islam (House of Islam, a euphemism for Islamic State), one of the rebelling groups, was a militant Muslim group which desired the establishment of a separate Islamic republic. A guerrilla organization during the anti-Dutch revolution, Darul Islam had continued to operate even after Indonesia attained independence in 1949, and for at least part of the time during the late 1950's and early 1960's it cooperated with rebel groups against the Indonesian government. A number of the rebels also belonged to the Masjumi Party, a much more conservative Muslim group. Masjumi was later officially dissolved by the government for not disowning those of its leaders who joined the rebellion, but the party as a whole did not participate in the rebellion. Christians also played some part in the rebellions. A center of the Permesta rebel group was the Minahasa area of Sulawesi, which has a large Christian population. The same was true of Ambon. There were, however, Christian Indonesians who favored the government. In neither the case of Masjumi nor of the Christian population was religion a decisive factor in encouraging rebellion; in neither case was there official endorsement of the rebellion. Except for Darul Islam, it is improbable that either religious or ethnic groups were prime movers in the rebellions, although, once they began, religious and ethnic motives undoubtedly provided impetus.¹⁵

The Issue of Communism

In another way, religion and communism were interfaced among the issues which led to rebellion. Under President Sukarno, the Indonesian Communist Party (*Partai Komunis Indonesia* or PKI) was permitted to function, and indeed in a number of respects the government appeared after 1950 to be assuming a pro-Communist position. In the eyes of the Muslim groups, the Communists were materialistic in outlook and therefore unacceptable. Many of the Muslim leaders wanted no Communists in the government. On the other hand, under *Pantja Sila*—the five principles of nationalism, internationalism, representative government, social justice, and faith in God enunciated by Sukarno in 1945 as the Republic's official credo¹⁶—the government frowned upon religious reactionaries, stressing instead the need for all groups to work

together.¹⁷ This position was never fully acceptable to the more conservative Muslims. However the issue of communism should not be overstressed. It was the government's position that the rebels called themselves anti-Communists mainly "in the hope of obtaining aid from the West."¹⁸

Dutch Influence

Among the groups which were involved in the rebellions, the Republik Maluku Selatan (Republic of the South Moluccas), which was set up under Dutch auspices and first proclaimed by a Dr. Christian Soumokil on April 25, 1950, played an unclear but minor role. Comparatively inactive, except for propaganda, this group contrived to make itself a constant annoyance to the Republic of Indonesia for a number of years thereafter, particularly because it was a center for Dutch-oriented Indonesians and provided a point of departure for the Dutch in their later campaign to prevent Indonesia's obtaining West New Guinea (Irian Barat.)¹⁹

The Power Struggle in the Army

What appears in the final analysis to have set off the rebellions was an unresolved power struggle among the military. In a country where approximately 80 percent of the administrative functions were carried out by the army, the role of the military was critical.²⁰ A power struggle within the military establishment began as early as 1952, when Col. (later Gen.) Abdul Harris Nasution, favoring the reduction of army strength and its reconstitution as a more professional group, was involved in an antigovernment move and was replaced as Chief of Staff by Col. (later Maj. Gen.) Bambang Sugeng.²¹ Colonel Sugeng attempted to restore a semblance of cooperation between the military professionals and the large unwieldy group which had become the army. The struggle was not a new one: Vice President Mohammad Hatta had tried to "rationalize" the army during the revolution. In February 1955, a large group of army officers met at the graves of the revolutionary military leaders General Sudirman and Lieutenant General Urip and read a statement evincing their uncertain temper:

We are not yet able to offer you incense in the form of a free, secure, prosperous Indonesia. We are only able to offer you our promise that we shall follow the path of your souls' greatness, of your great sacrifice and that we will take care of the gift which is your legacy.²²

When on May 11, 1955, General Sugeng resigned as Chief of Staff, the struggle within the military was just beginning. The appointment of Bambang Utojo as Chief of Staff was boycotted by a number of army officers. When President Sukarno left the country for a trip to Mecca, leaving Vice President Mohammad Hatta in charge, the latter appointed Barhanuddin Harahap as Premier. He in turn promoted Colonel Nasution to major general and reappointed him Chief of Staff.²³ This might have ended the rebellion before it began.

Sukarno Moves to Include Communists in the Government

At this point President Sukarno was, for the first time in his career, seriously challenged in his role as the country's leader. Fortunately for him, help came in the form of an invitation to visit the United States, soon followed by similar invitations from Moscow and Peking. As a result of these visits, made in the spring and summer of 1956, Sukarno's prestige in Indonesia soared. The trips to Moscow and Peking especially had their aftermath in the form of a new political concept which President Sukarno brought home with him.²⁴

On his return in 1956, President Sukarno announced his decision to introduce demokrasi terpimpin, (guided democracy) as the most appropriate form of government for Indonesia: "What I would like to have for Indonesia is a guided democracy . . . but still a democracy . . . in the way I saw in the Chinese People's Republic."²⁵ This was to include an invitation to the Communists to join the Indonesian government.²⁶

Dr. Hatta was opposed to the President's concept and against any Communist participation in the government. Concerned over the country's economic stagnation, bothered by the gulf between the central government and the outer islands, and angered by Djakarta's "blunders, bungling, callousness, and corruption,"²⁷ Hatta resigned as Vice President on December 1, 1956, on the grounds that his office had lost its meaning. After his resignation, the office was not filled. In February 1957, President Sukarno publicly announced his idea of implementing "guided democracy" on the principle of gotong rojong (mutual help), a traditional Indonesian village concept. He also reported his intention to appoint a National Advisory Council, in which all decisions would be reached by consensus and thus be unanimous. President Sukarno, the major governmental figure since the days of the revolution, now in fact became the government.²⁸ And that government would include Communists, whom the President apparently thought he could control.²⁹

Demands for Greater Autonomy for Sumatra

In the meantime, events had not stood still among the military. In November 1956 the Dewan Banteng (Buffalo Council), a wartime guerrilla unit, held a reunion in Padang, Sumatra, and decided to try to obtain greater autonomy for Central Sumatra. As the latter region was inhabited for the most part by the homogeneous Minangkabau, this resolution had some impact.³⁰ Other dewan-dewan (councils) were also revived, notably the Dewan Garuda (Eagle Council) in South Sumatra under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Barlian.

On December 20, 1956, the reorganized Banteng Division under the leadership of Lt. Col. Ahmad Huseini took over effective administration of the provincial government of Central Sumatra on the grounds that the demands made at the Padang meeting had not been carried out by the central government. This action was followed on December 22 with an announcement by Col. Maludin Simbolon, commander of the First Military Area (North Sumatra), that he had severed

relations with the central government and refused to recognize the cabinet of Premier Ali Sastroamidjojo, whom President Sukarno had appointed on his return to Indonesia to replace Harahap. The cabinet responded by dismissing Colonel Simbolon from his post and replacing him with Lt. Col. Djamin Gintings. In a pattern that was to characterize this peculiar war, Colonel Simbolon peacefully transferred his post to Colonel Gintings on December 27, 1956, and then reportedly fled with some 330 of his followers.³¹

The rebellion continued to develop slowly, each side apparently reluctant to bring matters to a head. On December 29, 1956, President Sukarno declared the area held by the Second Territorial Army (South Sumatra, including its territorial waters) to be in a state of war and siege. Lieutenant Colonel Barlian, who had been in close communication with many of the men who were later to become rebel leaders, was at that time commander of the Second Military Territory. In a message on January 1, 1957, he urged the government to grant immediate autonomous powers to the regions and to establish a fair balance financially between the regions and the central government. A further step was undertaken by Barlian on January 22, 1957, when he met with the Banteng Council and the Djambi People's Congress. At this meeting, agreement was reached that the southern Sumatran region of Djambi should have the status of an autonomous region of a provincial level.

In an attempt to settle matters peaceably, the government called for a meeting on January 29 of divisional, regimental, and battalion commanders throughout Sumatra, under the supervision of Army Chief of Staff General Nasution. The avowed purpose of the meeting was to consolidate the armed forces, and it was attended by both Colonels Simbolon and Husein. On February 25, 1957, President Sukarno called for another meeting of the dissidents, in order to try to work out an understanding in conjunction with the government. Among those invited were Colonel Simbolon, Lieutenant Colonel Husein, and the three chief Darul Islam leaders at the time: Daud Beureuh of Sumatra, Kartosewirjo of West Java, and Kahar Muzakkar of Sulawesi.

The Permesta Charter Marks Withdrawal of Sulawesi

In spite of these conciliatory efforts, the insurgents promulgated a "Charter of the Universal Struggle," or the Permesta Charter, as it became known.* This was signed on March 2, 1957, in the Territory of the Wirabuana Military District VII on Sulawesi, by a committee of 51 persons, including the District VII army commander, Lt. Col. Herman Nicholas "Ventje" Samual; Lt. Col. Saleh Lahade, who had introduced the charter; and Sulawesi Governor Andi Pangerang.³² The Permesta Charter, read over Radio Makassar, proclaimed that, in order to preserve the unity of the Indonesian Republic and especially the unity of the people of East Indonesia, a state of war existed in Military Territory VII and a military regime would henceforth function

*Semesta, meaning "universal," was first used to designate this group; later it had the name, Permesta, a word-play on semesta.

in the area. This was declared to be in line with Article 129 of Indonesia's Provisional Constitution and Government Regulation No. 32, 1948. The charter included the statement that Military Territory VII did not intend to sever relations with the rest of Indonesia but merely intended to take over local administration. On the day following this proclamation, Lieutenant Colonel Sumual ordered all government funds frozen and decreed that not more than Rp. 500,000 could be taken out of the area.

Anticipating trouble in Sulawesi, the government had already sent a military command called the South and Southeast Sulawesi Pacifying Command to take over the troops of Military District VII and the nine battalions of the Brawidjaja Division which were separated from their command and located around Makassar. This command was under a Colonel Sudirman, who was directly responsible to the Army Chief of Staff. The Permesta Charter was presented to Colonel Sudirman as a fait accompli. Colonel Sudirman, consulting the Army Chief of Staff, determined not to come into armed conflict with Lieutenant Colonel Sumual, and the Office of the Chief of Staff sent three officers to investigate the situation.³²

It is almost impossible to set a single date for the beginning of the rebellions. In some ways, the Permesta Charter—despite its writers' denial that they were in rebellion against the central government—marked the beginning of the final breakdown of communications between the central government and the outer regions. Negotiations continued for almost a year before the central government gave official cognizance to the dissidents, but the existence of the Permesta Charter undoubtedly encouraged other antigovernment groups. By not suppressing the Permesta movement at once, the central government appeared to give it tacit acceptance.

South Sumatra Withdraws

In the meantime, there were continued disturbances in other areas of the archipelago. On March 9, 1957, a delegation of the Regional Legislative Assembly submitted a vote of no confidence in Governor Winarno of South Sumatra to Lieutenant Colonel Barlian, the district commander of South Sumatra, and recommended that the latter take over control of the province. Barlian immediately announced by radio that, as of the previous day, South Sumatra was in a state of war and siege.

Military Leaders Continue the Permesta Movement

On March 14, 1957, partly as a result of the disturbances, Premier Ali Sastroamidjojo and his cabinet resigned, and President Sukarno declared the entire country in a state of war and siege. This declaration had the apparently unexpected effect of giving more power than ever to the already dissident military authorities in the provinces. In still another attempt to settle matters peaceably, General Nasution called a meeting of the military district commanders, to be held at Djakarta from March 15 to 20. At the conference, the problems which had arisen in

Sulawesi and Sumatra were discussed, and it was decided to abolish both Sudirman's and Sumual's commands in Sulawesi, setting up instead four military districts to cover the entire area of East Indonesia. The general purpose of the meeting was, of course, to find a way to restore the authority of the central government in the disaffected areas.³¹

The decision to set up military districts was promulgated by presidential decree in May 1957 (No. 240/M/1957), and the government appeared to have won its point. Sumual stated his satisfaction with the decision and on June 7, 1957, both he and Colonel Sudirman peacefully transferred their commands to the newly appointed commander of the South and Southeast Sulawesi Military District, Lt. Col. Andi Matalatta. General Nasution then generously appointed Lieutenant Colonel Sumual as Chief of Staff to Matalatta and made him chief executor of the plan to establish the four military districts. As soon as Nasution returned to Djakarta, however, Sumual escaped from Makassar to Manado in the company of Col. Dahlan Djambek, at that time still one of the Deputy Army Chiefs of Staff and later to emerge as one of the leaders of the rebellion in Sumatra.

On June 27, Sumual and Djambek, together with Maj. (later Lt. Col.) J. D. Somba and other military and civilian leaders, held a "Permesta Working Conference" in Gorontalo, Sulawesi. Here they reached the decision to establish a province of North Sulawesi and to appoint as Governor of the province H. D. Manoppo, Resident Coordinator of Central Sulawesi. Nonetheless, throughout this period, leaders of the Permesta movement continued to maintain that their only aims were regional development and a greater share of economic benefits to the outer regions, rather than any political disagreement with the central government.³²

Political Discontent Grows

While these events were taking place on the military side, it was becoming increasingly evident that a number of civilian groups in Indonesia felt that the outer regions should have more representation in the central government—probably by means of a bicameral legislature—and possibly more local autonomy. Among the parties advocating these measures were the Muslim parties Masjumi and Nahdlatul Ulama; the Socialist Party; and the Ikatan Pendjungjung Kemerdekaan Indonesia (IPKI), or League of Upholders of Indonesian Independence, a party originally founded by General Nasution when he was out of favor in 1952, but one which later came to oppose him and his policies.³³

The Government Attempts to Neutralize the Insurgents

The plethora of political parties with which Indonesia had become inundated since independence and their general opposition to the central government led President Sukarno to feel that democracy in its Western sense was not the correct form of government for Indonesia. He had already voiced his intention of introducing "guided democracy." With the resignation of the Ali

Sastroamidjojo cabinet on March 11, the President was provided with the opportunity of going outside the usual lines of government, and he decided to introduce an extra-parliamentary cabinet. On April 9, 1957, this cabinet, consisting of Prime Minister Djuanda Kartawidjaja and 22 other members, was sworn in. Although Djuanda's title was later changed to First Minister, he continued until his death in 1963 as second in command to Sukarno.

Throughout 1957, the government continued to act in the hope that open rebellion might be prevented. And in fact, immediate correction of some of the justified complaints of the rebellious groups, combined with a business-like setting forth of conditions which the rebels also would have to meet, might have avoided bloodshed. It is possible that either greater firmness or more conciliation might have succeeded. As it was, the government took uncertain steps in both directions, with the result that the rebels acted like wayward children attempting to see how far they might push a wavering parent. The rebel groups certainly had some legitimate grievances. It was, in part, recognition of this fact, as well as the desire not to present the spectacle of civil war in the newly independent nation, that led the government to be as tolerant as it was.

The Indonesian approach involved discussion after discussion and the establishment of new offices and new districts, often without removing already existing ones. In a number of cases, there were overlapping administrations for the same area, with the result that nobody could be held really responsible.

On July 5, 1957, the government, working within the framework of martial law, went ahead with the process of setting up military territories and appointing military administrators. Curiously enough, the man appointed as military administrator of South and Southeast Sulawesi was Military Governor Andi Pangerang Daeng Rani, who had been among the signers of the Permesta Charter. The government followed this pattern in several other cases with varying success. Sometimes the appointment of a rebel or potential rebel to a government position won the man over to the government's side; but sometimes the appointee merely pretended to accept the position, using it as a convenient means of avoiding government prosecution until the opportunity for escape presented itself.³⁷

Meanwhile, on July 12, President Sukarno installed his newly created National Advisory Council of 42 members representing government, functional groups, and regional leaders.³⁸ There was wide disagreement as to the council's exact function. In theory it was purely advisory, but in fact it assumed much of the power of the cabinet and Parliament. A number of regional leaders, dissatisfied with the situation, determined to hold a Regional Councils Conference. Meanwhile, on August 15, 1957, the National Advisory Council itself recommended the holding of a Musjawarah Nasional (National Discussion); and on September 3, the Chief of Staff instructed Lieutenant Colonel Barlian in South Sumatra to prevent the holding of the Regional Councils Conference until after the government's Musjawarah Nasional in mid-September.

The Rebels Formulate Demands in the Palembang Charter

Feeling the need for a solid joint approach, however, several of the regional military leaders met at Palembang, South Sumatra, on September 7-8. Among those attending were Colonels Barlian, Ahmad Husein, Sumual, Maludin Simbolon, Zulkifli Lubis, and others. Entering into a formal agreement called the Palembang Charter, they demanded Mohammad Hatta's return to the government, the immediate replacement of the Army High Command, decentralization of the government with greater regional autonomy, establishment of a senate, and prohibition of communism as being opposed to the principles of Pantja Sila. By citing the Pantja Sila in this connection, the Palembang conferees indicated that, although they might feel the government was not properly pursuing the goals of the Indonesian revolution, they did not oppose President Sukarno personally. It was further stipulated at the Palembang meeting that, in the event that the central government resorted to military or administrative sanctions, the three territories of Central and South Sumatra and East Indonesia would maintain solidarity.³⁹

The Government Fails to Meet the Palembang Goals

The government's Musjawarah Nasional, held from September 10 to 16, 1957, was attended by representatives of the central government administration, regional administration, and the military commanders, as well as by President Sukarno and former Vice President Mohammad Hatta. It was resolved that normal relations be restored between the regions and the central government, that immediate autonomy be granted to the regions, and that financial and economic conditions be improved in all of the Indonesian provinces. It was also urged that Sukarno and Hatta cooperate. Agreement, however, was again more apparent than real.

Reflecting upon the meeting later, the Palembang leaders decided that they had accomplished none of their actual goals: the issue of the senate had not been touched upon in the resolution, nor had it been discussed during the previous days' deliberation; the issue of communism had been left in abeyance; and the change of the Army High Command had been left in the hands of a Committee of Seven, in which one member was Nasution and only Hatta and the Sultan of Djogjakarta were not actually hostile to the Palembang group.⁴⁰ Recalling that the resolution had, in fact, been jointly presented to the conferees as a fait accompli by Sukarno and Hatta, the Palembang leaders felt that Hatta had given the victory to Sukarno, in the process weakening any later position he might take. It was only because they did not wish publicly to repudiate Hatta, the Palembang leaders stated, that they had not disavowed the resolution at the time.

The Rebellion Accelerates

As a result, the Palembang Charter group decided to meet again from September 21 to 22, this time at Padang. Colonel Sumual in the meantime had returned to Sulawesi and was not

present at this second meeting. At this Padang meeting, the conferees decided to accelerate the economic and military consolidation of South Sumatra, Central Sumatra, and East Indonesia. From this time on, the Daerah (regional) movement gave increasing stress to the objective of a national anti-Communist front.

An event with which the rebels disclaimed any connection was the unsuccessful attempt to assassinate President Sukarno at Tjikini School in Djakarta on November 30, 1957. The central government, however, maintained that Ahmad Husein, Dahlan Djambek, Maludin Simbolon, and Zulkifli Lubis were involved in this affair.⁴¹ Whoever was involved, the attempt demonstrated the uncertain temper of the country. It also drew the dissident groups closer together.

After President Sukarno left the country on January 6, 1958, for a trip abroad, rumors began to fly. It was said that the government planned military attacks on the dissident groups, that the government planned arrest of the dissident leaders, and that the dissidents planned to begin open military action while the President was away. As a result, numerous meetings were held between the Palembang leaders, the Permesta leaders, and a number of civilians, chiefly members of the Muslim Masjumi Party. The civilian group included Burhanuddin Harahap, the former Premier who had been appointed by Hatta in 1955 when Sukarno was out of the country; Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, President of the Emergency Government during the Indonesian revolution against the Dutch and, just before his defection to the rebels, governor of the Central Bank of Indonesia; and Dr. Sumitro Djojohadikusumo, a leading economist who was Finance Minister in the Indonesian government until shortly before his joining the rebels. Former Prime Minister Mohammad Natsir, head of the Masjumi Party, was one of the major forces behind the new demands that were now made. Although disagreeing about almost everything except the need for a change, most groups eventually concurred in backing an ultimatum. Issued by Ahmad Husein on February 10, 1958, a few days before Sukarno was due to return to the country, this ultimatum demanded that the Djuanda Kartawidjaja cabinet return its mandate within five days and that Mohammad Hatta and the Sultan of Djogjakarta, Hamengku Buwono IX, be named to form a new cabinet.

The Indonesian Cabinet rejected the ultimatum. Colonels Ahmad Husein, Zulkifli Lubis, Dahlan Djambek, and Maludin Simbolon were dishonorably discharged; all battalion commanders were temporarily placed directly under the Chief of Staff;⁴² and all communications to and from Central Sumatra were cut off.

INSURGENCY

The response of the rebels was the declaration in Padang on February 15, 1958, of the Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia (PRRI), or Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia. The rebellion had finally officially begun.

The PRRI regime was evidently formed on the basis of several mistaken assumptions. One of these was the belief that Mohammad Hatta and Sultan Hamengku Buwono of Djogjakarta, as well as other prominent Indonesian leaders, would join in active support. Instead, both Hatta and the Sultan, although in sympathy with some of the grievances of the rebels, deplored a movement that might threaten Indonesian unity.

Rebel Government and Leadership

Since both the Sultan and Mohammad Hatta refused to join the PRRI government, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, as the next most prominent civilian among potential leaders, was named PRRI Prime Minister. Curiously enough, neither Ahmad Husein, head of the Dewan Banteng and a pivotal figure in the rebellion, nor Zulkifli Lubis, whose name occurred frequently in central government (if not in rebel) reports as being a key man in the rebellion, had positions in the PRRI government.

There were 16 ministries in the PRRI government. In the initial cabinet, Sjafruddin held the post of Finance Minister, as well as that of Prime Minister. Other ministries were staffed as follows: Foreign Affairs, Col. Maludin Simbolon; Internal Affairs, Col. Mohammad Dahlan Djambek; Defense and Justice, Burhanuddin Harahap; Commerce and Communications, Dr. Sumitro Djojohadikusumo; Education and Health, Mohammad Sjafei; Reconstruction, Col. Joop F. Warouw; Agriculture and Labor, Sa'adin Sarumpaet; Information, Lt. Col. Saleh Lahade; Religious Affairs, Mochtar Lintang; and Social Affairs, Abdul Gani Usman (also known as Ajah or "Father" Gani). Shortly thereafter, the cabinet was altered somewhat to include two other persons: Asaat Datuk Mudo took over the post of Minister of Internal Affairs and Sulaiman took over the Ministry of Labor.

The cabinet remained in this form until, after severe military defeats on Sumatra, the PRRI government was transferred from Padang to Bukittinggi in Sumatra, and then to Menado, Sulawesi, in May 1958.⁴³ With most of its official family in Sulawesi, the center of the Permesta movement, the PRRI, previously only loosely allied with Permesta, became increasingly identified with it.

In its final form, the "working cabinet" at Menado consisted of Col. Joop Warouw as Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Reconstruction, Industry, and Public Works, and Acting Defense Minister; Dr. Sumitro Djojohadikusumo as Minister of Commerce, Communications, Foreign Affairs, Finance, etc.; Prof. Mochtar Lintang as Minister of Religious Affairs, Acting Minister of Interior, and Acting Minister of Labor; W. J. D. Pesik (formerly Indonesian Consul General in Viet-Nam) as Minister of State; and Dr. R. A. V. Sual as Treasurer General.⁴⁴ The location of other rebel leaders, both civilian and military, was not always known. Prime Minister Sjafruddin and some other members of his cabinet were believed to be in hiding on Sumatra; still others were thought to be carrying on underground activities in Java.

Several members of diplomatic and military missions abroad left their posts to join or help the rebels. Among the most prominent were the Indonesian Ambassador to Italy, Sultan Mohammad Rasjid, who carried on propaganda activities for the rebels in Europe; W. J. D. Pesik, Indonesian Consul General at Saigon; and Military Attachés Kawilarang and Joop Warouw, who joined the rebels in a military capacity.⁴⁵ A number of members from the Masjumi overtly or covertly supported the rebellions, and the Partai Kristen Indonesia (Parkindo) or Christian Party of Indonesia was also accused of supporting the rebels, particularly in the Tapanuli area.⁴⁶

Rebel Strategy and Strength

With the setting up of the rebel government, the insurrection took on a new complexion. Initially, the leaders of the PRRI and Permesta groups had reiterated their basic loyalty to President Sukarno and asked only that certain reforms be made. With the outbreak of open conflict, it became the goal of the insurgents to gain recognition as belligerents in international law. Believing that their control of an extensive amount of territory might lead to *de facto* recognition of the rebel government or at least recognition of belligerent status, the PRRI leaders planned a territorial defense. However, the almost immediate fall in mid-1958 of the Sumatran cities of Padang, Bukittinggi, and Pekanbaru forced the insurgents into a hastily organized guerrilla war with only a small portion of the forces they had thought would be at their disposal.⁴⁷

It is impossible to say precisely how many were involved in the rebellions. In September 1958, the Indonesian government estimated that about 6,000 Permesta rebels had surrendered to or rejoined the government in Sulawesi. It was thought that the Permesta rebels still had about 9,000 more-or-less regular troops in Sulawesi, their core formed by Battalions No. 702, No. 714, and No. 719, as well as by the former Mobile Brigade and those police groups which had joined them. In addition to these 9,000, it was estimated that the rebels had the support of about 4,000 student fighters and about 2,000 former members of the KNIL (Royal Netherlands Indies Army—the Dutch colonial army in the Indies), as well as about 500 members of an armed band led by one Jan Timbuleng.⁴⁸ These figures did not include the Darul Islam groups in Java and the remaining Darul Islam and PRRI troops in Sumatra. Other government figures regarding surrenders tended to support the rebels' contention that, when the conflict was at its height, they had 30 battalions in Sumatra and 17 in Sulawesi, operating as guerrillas.⁴⁹ By government reports, it accepted 20,000 surrenders in the Medan area of Sumatra alone between January and August of 1961,⁵⁰ and it announced that 47,000 ex-rebels in Sulawesi alone were affected by an amnesty of August 1, 1961.⁵¹ It is quite possible that as many as 100,000 persons may have been directly involved in guerrilla operations against the government at one time or another.

The Varied Nature of Rebel Groups

The rebellions had a number of curious features. One was the fact that, despite relatively little local assistance, new groups of guerrillas continued to be formed. Many of these were, of

course, merely bandit groups using the upheaval to mask their own activities; others were truly insurgent groups. One of the most important of the latter was the Manguni group, probably formed in the vicinity of Djakarta in the latter part of 1959 and led by Samel Karundeng. The avowed purposes of Manguni, according to the statement made by Karundeng after his arrest, were sabotage, provocation among mutually antagonistic groups, abduction of political and military leaders, and the collection of intelligence.⁵² A Manguni plan to kidnap a number of important leaders, including President Sukarno, and thus to force government negotiations with the rebels, did not materialize. On March 19, 1960, however, Karundeng led a raid on the Bandung Army Cavalry Training Center and was temporarily successful in gaining control of the center. Even more daring was the action on March 9, 1960, of a Manguni member, Daniel Alexander Maukar, who was an officer in the Indonesian Air Force. Flying a MIG-17 in a flight exercise, Maukar suddenly began machinegunning the presidential palace in Djakarta, then managed to break away from his stunned fellow pilots to machinegun the summer palace at nearby Bogor, before crashing unhurt into the jungle. He was later captured and brought to trial.⁵³

Rebel Morale and Loyalty

Another interesting aspect of the rebellion was the peculiar relationship between the government and many of the rebel leaders. In July 1960 the government of the South Palopo area of South Sulawesi reported having received a letter from Darul Islam leader Kahar Muzakkar in which he apologized for having ambushed government troops and asked that government troops move out of the area so that the rebels could return to cultivate their rice and so that the Palopo area might be used as a site for peace negotiations. The government was understandably wary of Muzakkar: he had previously sued for an armistice but, after being given funds for relief and reconstruction, he had returned to the jungle and used the money to pursue the civil war.⁵⁴ As late as 1961, Muzakkar was apparently still in control of a large area of Sulawesi; he was reported killed by government troops in the spring of 1965.

A number of the leaders of the rebellion appear to have been strangely apathetic or even disloyal to their cause. Some Indonesian rebel leaders returned to the government's ranks. A costly mistake for the rebels was their reliance on Colonel Barlian of South Sumatra. Barlian had earlier pledged to join Central Sumatra and Sulawesi in a united stand against the central government. In the spring of 1958, however, when the time came for action, he held back. He was said to have provided diesel oil and gasoline to the rebels but he refused to commit himself further. His hesitancy gained him nothing since he was relieved of his command shortly thereafter, but his defection undoubtedly hurt the rebel cause.⁵⁵ Dr. Sumitro, with some justice, blamed the loss of the Sumatran cities on Colonel Barlian's failure to commit South Sumatra, which had caused a break in the insurgents' lines of communication.⁵⁶ In Sulawesi, Colonel Kawilarang, theoretically in charge of rebel operations, was rarely in evidence. As early as

1958 there was speculation as to his real role in the rebellion and conjecture that he was not in wholehearted support of the rebel campaign. Not only was it said that he never appeared in military uniform and could usually be found playing tennis or riding a motorbicycle, but he was also reported to have been in a number of places in Sulawesi, each of which was captured by government troops soon after he left.⁵⁷

Logistical Problems

Acquisition of equipment and supplies posed many problems for the rebels. At various times there were reports of looting and terrorism in the villages and complaints that the rebels had made off with food or ammunition without recompense. On the other hand, in one rather tender incident the armed "terrorists" entered two villages in Garut regency and, instead of looting, left behind seven babies, all under one year of age, together with some clothes and money. Although no messages were left, the villagers were under the impression that the rebels wished their children reared under conditions of security.⁵⁸

A major mistake on the part of the insurgents was their belief that the PRRI would receive substantial monetary and military aid from abroad. There appears in fact to have been some smuggling from Singapore, the Philippines, and perhaps Taiwan; and a few American, Nationalist Chinese, and Filipino pilots flew for the rebels. The role which foreign governments and, more particularly, the United States may have played in the rebellions is naturally difficult to assess since such aid would necessarily have been of a secret nature.⁵⁹

External Aid for Rebels

The Indonesian government, for its own reasons, fostered the belief within Indonesia that the rebellions were backed by foreign powers, but the only substantial evidence for such accusations was the capture of a single pilot of American nationality, Allan Lawrence Pope.* Although it was true that much of the rebel equipment captured by the government was of U.S. make, this could have been bought on the open market in other countries, or indeed it could have been captured by the rebels from Indonesian troops who were using U.S. arms. It is not possible therefore to assign a definite role to the United States government; later it did give aid to the Indonesian government. If the rebels expected to receive substantial aid from abroad, it may be assumed that they would have had to demonstrate a reasonable chance of success. It was reported, in fact, that Colonel Simbolon was perturbed by the rebels' early abandonment of much of Sumatra because this meant "would be likely to shake the confidence of interests abroad. . . ."⁶⁰

*Pope's trial went on for years, and he was officially sentenced to death, but he was, in fact, quietly and without fanfare released and returned to the United States.

Since the rebels apparently waited rather than acted, aid which might have been forthcoming under other circumstances was apparently denied them. Dr. Sumitro indeed stated that one of the chief reasons for the rebel failure was the fact that, while the West protested its sympathy for the rebels, its actual support lagged far behind. When the rebels attempted to buy or insure a ship, they were unable to do so, and they were also required to pay cash for all weapons. Dr. Sumitro further stated—although this may be questionable—that the rebels obtained no aid from the United States.⁶¹ It is certain, in any event, that aid in sufficient quantities to achieve success was not forthcoming.

Ironically, external aid became a double loss for the rebels, as the government hammered home a winning propaganda point, proclaiming that the rebels had only foreign supplies and thus existed only by dint of support from abroad. With equal vehemence, the rebels replied that they received no support from outside Indonesia, that all pilots were native, and that all training took place on Indonesian soil. Nonetheless, it was apparently widely believed that the rebels were supported by external powers and were thus not truly Indonesian in their outlook and aims. Thus their reputed foreign sponsorship cost them popular support without providing the material aid which might have compensated for the loss.

Except in the Minahasa area of Sulawesi, the rebel groups did not receive much positive support from the local population. This was not, however, due to any reluctance of the local people to fight the central government—a fact attested to by an incident in the Toradja area of Sulawesi. The Toradjans, largely Christian-animist, joined neither the rebels nor the government. Their greatest enemies were their neighbors, the Buginese. In the spring of 1958, the military commander of the Palopo area pushed into Toradja territory with eight companies of troops, chiefly Buginese, with the avowed purpose of capturing Permesta troops. He refused to accept attestations that there had never been Permesta troops in the area and carried out severe punitive measures against the Toradjans. In the belief that this move was more one of hostility by their traditional Buginese enemies than a valid action of the central government, the Toradjans mustered their total arsenal of 10 to 15 weapons and managed to eliminate all but one company of government troops. In this action they appear to have been aided by the largely Christian Police Mobile Brigade Unit at Rantepao-Makale. It is evident that, if the cause were sufficient, the local people were quite capable of fighting.⁶²

The Insurgency Fades Away

The rebels conducted a singularly desultory military campaign, marked by occasional raids on towns, but chiefly characterized by a predilection to flee whenever government forces approached. It seems clear that the rebels' military ineffectiveness, the sporadic infighting among various rebel sectors, and the failure to receive either sufficient internal or external support had an extremely enervating effect upon the rebellion.

In what was almost a last effort, the PRRI in January 1949 changed its name to the RPI (Republik Persatuan Indonesia, or United Indonesian Republic). The change was said to have been supported by Mohammad Natsir, the former head of the Masjumi Party, and PRRI Premier Sjafruddin Prawiranegara; but it was opposed by Ahmad Husein, who wished to maintain the identity of the PRRI, and Djambek and Usman, who were said to want to establish an Islamic government on the order of Darul Islam.⁶³ Although this move was made with the intent of conciliating and consolidating the various rebel forces, it does not appear to have achieved its purpose.

By 1960 the rebellion was almost over. There was a little fighting from time to time, but on the whole the rebels did more surrendering than fighting.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

In every sense the major counterinsurgent force in Indonesia was the person of the President. The boy who was to become "Sukarno" was named Kusno Sosro when he was born at Surabaya in East Java on June 6, 1901, the son of a schoolteacher of moderate circumstances. Although Sukarno was graduated from the Technische Hoogeschool in Bandung with the degree of insinjur (engineer), he had been interested from an early age in politics. As a teenager he had joined the Young Java movement, writing fiery political articles under the pen name of "Bima," and had lived for some years in the home of the founder of the Indonesian Islamic League,

O. S. Tjokroaminoto. Here he met most of the major Indonesian political leaders of the time. He also contracted an ephemeral marriage with Tjokroaminoto's daughter.

As he matured, Sukarno broke away from the Indonesian Islamic League, began to make impassioned and effective political speeches against the Dutch, and in 1927 helped to found a short-lived party, the Partai Nasionalis Indonesia (unrelated to the present party of the same name). In 1929, a particularly successful speech in Bandung brought on Sukarno's arrest by the Dutch. A second arrest by the Dutch in 1934 resulted in his being sentenced to exile under Dutch surveillance; this ended only when he was freed eight years later by the Japanese. Using the Japanese occupiers of Indonesia to further the cause of independence from the Dutch, Sukarno proclaimed Indonesian independence on August 17, 1945, and led the four-year revolution against the Dutch that followed. President of Indonesia since its independence, he was in 1963 "elected" President for life by the People's Consultative Congress, a body he had previously appointed.

During the period of Sukarno's exile, he had married a woman considerably older than himself, but no children resulted from this marriage and it was eventually dissolved. Sukarno then married Fatmawati, by whom he had five children. He was later concurrently married to a divorcee, Hartini, in a union which resulted in two children. Sukarno's marriage to Hartini without allowing Fatmawati a divorce led to a storm of verbal disapproval on the part of Indonesian

women, but this may have been more apparent than real since there was no noticeable diminution of the esteem in which he was generally held by Indonesians. Indeed, for Indonesians, he held an unparalleled appeal difficult for outsiders to understand.

Sukarno Takes Military Action

Although the central government had quietly tolerated the existence of the Permesta movement in Sulawesi, the declaration of a PRRI government on February 15, 1958, brought a quick military response from President Sukarno. Having failed to prevent the insurgency from developing, he now turned to military means, giving General Nasution permission to move quickly and in force against the rebels. The main point upon which the central government was determined was that the rebels should not establish enough of a base to put in a bid for recognition as belligerents. On February 22, the government's air force successfully conducted air raids on the radio stations of Padang and Bukittinggi, in Sumatra, and on military targets in central Sumatra.

Operation TEGAS

The first major military operation in Sumatra was Operation TEGAS (FIRM),⁶⁴ which was planned for March 1958. TEGAS targets were the oil harbor and oil fields lying in the triangle formed by Pekanbaru, Pakning, and Dumai, as well as the important Lirik-Rengas oil field approximately 100 miles southeast of Pekanbaru. Although planned to begin on March 10, the operation was, because of technical difficulties, not actually launched until the 12th. The delay caused no noticeable difficulties.

There was a large element of luck in the government's success. Realizing that Pekanbaru was a logical target and that the rebels were likely to be more than ordinarily vigilant there, the government tried to distract the rebels' attention by naval maneuvers near Padang. While all attention was focused on the latter action, government troops quietly assembled at Tanjung Pinang on the Riau Islands in preparation for launching an attack against Pekanbaru. This ruse was entirely successful. Meanwhile, a week before the beginning of Operation TEGAS, an advance party of government troops landed on and occupied the Bengkalis Islands, from which the main offensive was to take place. Although rebel forces escaped to the mainland, their warnings were evidently disbelieved. At any rate, no preparation was made to meet the advancing government troops. Furthermore, the government's attack on Pekanbaru was fortuitously aided by the fact that it caught the rebels in the act of gathering up supplies which had been airdropped to them the previous day.

There was also good coordination among all three branches of the armed forces taking part in the operation. Army forces included the 528th Infantry Battalion/Brawidjaja, the Infantry Battalion "Banteng Raiders" /Diponegoro, the 322d Infantry Battalion/Siliwangi, the Regiment

Para Komando Angkatan Darat (RPKAD, or Army Commandos Regiment), the Cavalry, the Artillery, the Military Police, and the Corps of Engineers. Navy forces included the Korps Komando (Marine Corps) and a squadron of warships led by the corvette Banteng. Air force groups participating in Operation TEGAS encompassed the air force paratroops, squadrons of fighters and bombers, and transport aircraft.⁶⁵

Operation TEGAS was under the overall direction of army Lt. Col. Kaharudin Nasution. It involved two separate subcommands—Dongkrak (Lifting Jack) subcommand, led by Infantry Major Sukartidjo, and Kangguru (Kangaroo) subcommand, led by air force Lieutenant Colonel Wirjadinata. Subcommands Dongkrak and Kangguru were further subdivided. Dongkrak subcommand was divided into Kaladjengking (Scorpion) force, which had as its goal the taking of Dumai, and Kantjil (Mouse-deer) force, which was to take Pakning; after the capture of Dumai and Pakning, troops were to converge on Pekanbaru. Kangguru subcommand comprised X-ray force—consisting of the paratroops, the air force shock troops, and army commandos—and Kuat (Strong) force—which included troops to be air landed. It had the task of capturing the airfield and then the city of Pekanbaru, where it would reunite with Dongkrak subcommand.

The government's plans appear to have worked almost flawlessly. Kangguru subcommand began to move on March 12 at 0500, West Sumatra time, and by 0600 fighters and bombers were already in action. After having fired on the airfield to make sure it was cleared, government paratroops dropped on Pekanbaru airfield at 0730 and within 40 minutes had cleared the area in the vicinity of the airfield and were pursuing rebels into the countryside. By 1300, X-ray and Kuat forces had occupied the airfield and town of Pekanbaru, and the rebel forces had either surrendered themselves and their equipment or fled toward the west.⁶⁶

In the meantime, 36 hours before Kangguru subcommand began to move, Dongkrak subcommand had been brought by navy vessels to a rendezvous off mainland Bengkalis. It was at this point that the division between Kaladjengking and Kantjil forces took place, the former moving toward Dumai and the latter toward Pakning. Kaladjengking force occupied Dumai on the morning of March 12 and then, proceeding by the road built by the Caltex Oil installations, moved in the direction of Pekanbaru. Along the way, it captured Rumbai, and rejoined Kangguru subcommand in Pekanbaru on March 14. Kantjil force had equal success although it met with more enemy resistance. It moved along the Siak River, reached and occupied Pakning on March 12, and proceeded to take the town of Sri Siak Indrapura. Kantjil force reunited with the main force at Pekanbaru on March 16. By the 18th, the main rebel force in the area, about one company in strength, had surrendered, complete with weapons, including six bazookas.⁶⁷ Government spokesmen claimed that Operation TEGAS resulted in only one government casualty, a marine wounded during the landings.⁶⁸

Capture of the Airfields and Medan

In addition, about 100 miles southeast of Pekanbaru, the government dropped commando troops which, finding the rebels completely unprepared, captured the key Lirik-Rengat oil field. Government troops continued to move into North and Central Sumatra.

Because of swift action in these maneuvers, government troops had occupied Bagansiapiapi and Kota Tengah and the Lirik, Djapura, and Airmolek airfields within 10 days. Furthermore, the government put down a rebel attempt to recover lost ground led by two Regular Army officers who defected on March 16 and joined the insurgents: Maj. Boyke Nainggolan, who led a rebel thrust against Medan in the so-called Operation SABANG-MERAUKE,* and Capt. Sita Pohan, stationed in Tapanuli, who attempted to join him at Medan. In seizing Medan, Nainggolan was considerably aided by support from the 131st Battalion stationed there. He had formerly commanded this battalion and, apparently out of personal loyalty, it supported him. When loyal government troops descended on Medan from two directions, Colonel Kawilarang, the rebel commander in chief, did not enter Medan to support Nainggolan. By 0700 on March 17, the government was once more in control of Medan.⁶⁹ Nainggolan's troops fled in two directions—some with him as leader, escaped toward Tapanuli; while others, led by Maj. Said Usman, turned toward Atjeh, evidently intending to join the Darul Islam rebels.

Operation AUGUST 17

On April 17, 1958, government forces undertook Operation AUGUST 17 (named after the date of the initial proclamation of Indonesian independence in 1945), to consolidate the gains made under Operation TEGAS. Under the leadership of Col. A. Jani (later spelled Yani), Operation AUGUST 17 was conducted against the rebel capital of Padang in western Sumatra. Once more deceptive measures were effective. About 24 hours before the planned landing, a group of troop transports proceeded to Teluk Bajur harbor to give the rebels the impression that the landing would take place there. In the meantime, the Indonesian Navy shelled Padang in order to estimate the defenses of the town. On the night before the offensive, the transports slipped quietly away from Teluk Bajur to the landing area at Pantai Merah (Red Beach). At 0430 on the 17th, the Indonesian Navy opened fire on the beach, and at 0500 the army's commandos began landing. At 0600 a squadron of air force fighters began circling the town of Padang and its airfield, Tabing, to reconnoiter the airfield's defenses, which included rebel-laid land mines and bambu runtjing (pointed bamboo spears stuck into the ground at an angle). The air force also bombed a gun emplacement on the slopes of Mount Padang, which commanded

*Sabang and Merauke were two towns at the extremities of the Indonesian archipelago (the one in Sumatra, the other in West New Guinea) to which President Sukarno frequently referred in his campaign to regain Irian Barat (West New Guinea). Rebel use of this phrase, therefore, was both an attempt to dissociate the rebel movement from the Dutch and to give it a pro-Sukarno flavor, and an even more subtle attempt to imply nationalism as such.

both Padang and Teluk Bajur harbor. Air transports then began dropping paratroops on Tabin airport. Quickly clearing Tabin airport, government paratroopers united with the seaborne troops to occupy Padang. This was accomplished by 1700 of the same day.⁷⁰

Government Forces Clear Sumatra

From Padang, the rebels moved their capital to Bukittinggi, with government troops in pursuit. In fact, the object in landing both at Pantai Merah and at Tabin had been to cut off rebel retreat routes. Instead of rejoining other rebel troops at Bukittinggi, the PRRI troops fleeing from Padang were forced to go in the direction of Indarung, in an attempt to reach Solok, 30 miles northeast of Padang. By April 21, government forces were in control of Indarung and were in position to take Solok. Once more, however, Colonel Jani wished to cut off the rebels' line of retreat. Moving first against Alahan Pandjang, about 125 miles southeast of Bukittinggi, Colonel Jani captured it on April 22 and effectively blocked any rebel attempt to move into Sungei Penuh in the rich rice-growing area of Kerintji in Central Sumatra.⁷¹ Solok, now vulnerable from two sides and facing government troops from both Indarung and Alahan Pandjang, put up little resistance, falling on April 24. Colonel Jani then turned his attention to Bukittinggi, now isolated. Intermediate towns offered little resistance. Sawah Lunto, Lubuk Alung, and Padang Pandjang fell in rapid succession. Of Ahmad Husein, who had been said to be directing rebel operations from Bukittinggi, there was no sign. On May 4, 1958, Bukittinggi fell.

Government forces, meeting only token resistance, seemed almost baffled at the ease with which they had taken the most important portions of rebel territory in Sumatra. According to Col. Rudy Pirngadie, Chief of the Army Information Service, Indonesian Army leaders could not understand why the rebels had not defended such ideally positioned towns as Solok, Padang Pandjang, and Bukittinggi—all located in areas full of hills, ravines, and valleys which would have made defense easy.

Government successes against the rebels in Sumatra were overwhelming. From that time on, the rebels had no hope of opening a military offensive, their operations being confined to defensive and harassing guerrilla actions.⁷² Although a number of the PRRI rebel leaders were reported to be at large in Sumatra and even in Java, the chief military effort of the rebels—excluding Darul Islam activity in northern Sumatra and West Java—was now to be centered in Sulawesi.

The Army Moves Into Sulawesi and West Java

Operations against the rebels in Sulawesi had already begun shortly after the opening of Operation TEGAS in Sumatra. The first actual battle in Sulawesi—aside from Darul Islam raids on isolated villages—appears to have taken place at Donggala on March 29, 1958, with government troops led by Capt. Frans Karagan and supported by police units under Police Inspector

Sueb. According to government sources, the battle was initiated by Captain Karagan when he suspected that the rebels were preparing to act. Calling his action Operation INSJAF (REALIZATION), Captain Karagan cleared the rebels from Donggala and then pursued them southeast to Palu.

In the meantime, the Army High Command had also initiated Operation SAPTAMARGA (named for the seven pledges of loyalty given by members of the armed forces) in Sulawesi. In late March and early April, troops were brought into Sulawesi, and Operation INSJAF forces were also integrated into the group. Colonel Rukmito, Commander of SAPTAMARGA, assumed command of the entire group on April 18, 1958.⁷³

In the operation, relatively little use was made of paratroopers, as these were already exhausted by their work in Sumatra. Rather, fresh land forces, especially elite airborne troops (RPKAD), were used. Another problem was that throughout the initial stages of Operation SAPTAMARGA the rebels maintained air superiority. Two operations were therefore planned, MENA I and MENA II (FORWARD in Ambonese). MENA I was aimed at the capture of Djailolo airfield in Halmahera, from which rebel planes were operating. Morotai, however, proved a greater menace, so that MENA II was launched on May 18, 1958, by Amphibious Task Group No. 21. This group, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Hunholz, consisted of air force paratroopers, a landing force of 24 navy commandos, plus one battalion from the Brawidjaja Regiment from East Java and one detachment of the Brawidjaja from Ambon, one company of the Mobile Brigade from Ambon, and troop transports consisting of two regular transports and five German-built minesweepers. By May 20, Morotai was in government hands, and the government gained air superiority in Sulawesi. Operation MENA I was not launched until some two weeks later.⁷⁴

Operation SAPTAMARGA II, meanwhile begun on May 14, was concerned with the capture of Gorontalo; and by May 22, it was firmly in government hands.⁷⁵

The government carried on a number of other operations in Sulawesi, capturing the new rebel capital of Manado, as well as Kema, Wori, and other towns. Additional government operations included GURUH (THUNDER) in south Kerintji, Sumatra, in September 1958; MERDEKA (FREEDOM), one of the largest combined operations directed chiefly against Sulawesi, in 1958; and GUNTUR (another word for THUNDER) in South Sulawesi in 1960. GERAK (MOVEMENT) and GODAM (CLUB) were directed against the Darul Islam guerrillas in West Java during 1959. All operations had the same general mission—capture of the target city and interdiction of rebel routes to freedom. Government tactics were usually to capture possible escape routes first, then to attack the rebel stronghold. Against the Darul Islam rebels, especially in western Java, government strategy was to drive them into positions where lack of food or local support would eventually force them either to attempt to fight their way out or to surrender.

The Major Military Figure

The chief architect of the rebels' military defeat was Abdul Harris Nasution, Chief of Staff of the 400,000-man Indonesian Army⁷⁶ and in overall charge of the government's military campaigns. Born in December 1918, Nasution had been educated at the Royal Military Academy and had served in the Royal Netherlands Indies Army until 1942. Under the Japanese, Nasution had acted first as an official of Bandung municipality, later becoming leader of the Bandung Youth Front and deputy commander of the Bandung Pelopor (Pioneer) Battalion, as well as a member of the Angkatan Muda Bandung (Young Generation of Bandung). In the postwar period he fought against the Dutch, becoming Army Chief of Staff in 1950. Early in his career he was known as an ardent anti-Communist and one of the chief opponents of PKI power in Indonesia. Following machinations within the army and an attempt to reduce the size of the army and to professionalize it, Nasution was removed from power, remaining inactive from 1952 to 1955. In 1955, he was, as already noted, reinstated as Chief of Staff with rank of major general, with promotions to lieutenant general in 1958 and to full general in 1960.⁷⁷ During the period of the rebellions, Nasution's officer corps included many officers who had been trained in the United States, particularly at Fort Leavenworth, and he was able to take full advantage of this training.

External Support for Sukarno

Although the government received external aid—both from the Soviet bloc and from the West—this appears in no sense to have been decisive. The Soviet government made \$100 million credit available in 1956 and gave \$795,200 credit to private Indonesian firms in 1958. But the Indonesian government apparently did not even use the Ilyushins (jets) which it received from Czechoslovakia for fear of international repercussions; rebel charges that the government was pro-Communist apparently made President Sukarno hesitant to appear too far committed to the left. From 1950 to 1959, American economic aid to the government of Indonesia totaled \$335 million. By mid-1958, the United States was aware that the rebel cause was close to lost and accordingly sought to reconcile the rebels with the government. In fact, beginning in August 1958, the U.S. Air Force airlifted much-needed small arms to the Indonesian government. Under the Colombo Plan, Commonwealth countries also gave aid, as did Japan and West Germany. The Indonesian government was thus able to display on October 5, 1958, among its air force planes, Soviet MIG-15's and Ilyushin-28 jet bombers, as well as British Vampire jet trainers and U.S. Grumman Albatross amphibians.⁷⁸

Popular Support Goes to the Government

In general, the government retained or quickly regained the support of the local population. Although the people of the rebel areas had evidently been told that they could expect only abuse when government troops arrived, they were apparently well treated by the army, which was

under orders to attempt to make friends with the local population. By word of mouth, this information spread. As a result, after the first few months, it was only in very rare cases that the local population put up any struggle to aid the rebels against government forces. Indeed, the government reported, somewhat in surprise, that local villagers had begun spontaneously to form their own antirebel defense groups and guerrilla bands. One of the most prominent of the loyal guerrilla groups operated in Sulawesi as the Pasukan Pembela Kesatuan Republik Indonesia (Defenders of the Unity of the Republic of Indonesia); this group was also known as the Pasukan Tandjung Frisko (Troops of Cape Frisko). The government claimed that these guerrilla gangs were successful in operations against rebel units.⁷⁹

Sukarno's Political Measures Benefit the Communists

During the insurgency period, President Sukarno also proceeded to carry out his program of "guided democracy." On July 5, 1959, in a presidential decree, he announced a return to the Constitution of 1945. This step was more or less a response to rebel demands, but the manner of President Sukarno's return to the 1945 Constitution was hardly in accord with the expressed desire of the rebels for more democratic procedures: since Parliament had failed to vote for the return of the 1945 Constitution, Sukarno did so on his own personal authority. On March 5, 1960, President Sukarno dissolved the elected Indonesian Parliament;⁸⁰ on the 27th, he established an appointive Gotong Rojong (Mutual Help) Parliament, in which the Communists were awarded 65 of 261 seats.⁸¹ The new Parliament was officially inaugurated on June 25, 1960.⁸²

During the period of the PRRI/Permesta rebellions, the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI), under the capable leadership of Dipa Nusantara Aidit, saw its greatest advantage in the role of giving support to the counterinsurgency efforts of President Sukarno. One of the objections to the government's course, indeed, had been that, in allowing increasing Communist participation, the government was risking its own existence. The aims and nature of the rebellions, as a more or less rightist movement, were thus in large measure the ostensible cause of Communist support for the government.

By 1960, however, the PKI felt itself strong enough to criticize the government and to give voice to the rumor that Nasution had requested the rebels to return to the government in order to join forces against Communist aggrandizement. A Communist evaluation of July 8 stated that the President had been misled—an apparent attempt to drive a wedge between Sukarno and

*An interesting aspect concerning the dissolution of the elected Parliament was that one of the military heroes of the Indonesian revolution, Sutomo, actually sued the Indonesian government for acting in violation of the existing law when it dissolved the elected Parliament and replaced it with an appointed legislature. Sutomo, an elected member of the dismissed Parliament, sued on behalf of the 206,264 voters who had elected him in 1955. The case was eventually dismissed after having been tried by the Djakarta Special Court and later by the Djakarta Supreme Court. (See: *Antara*, September 21, 1960, and October 20, 1960.)

the army. The President then joined the issue, reestablishing a balance of power by coming to the aid of the Communists. But in a number of instances army commanders responded by issuing local bans on PKI activities on the grounds of security. In this dilemma, the Communists were apparently able to use the issue of regaining Irian Barat to focus attention elsewhere and to absorb the army's energies.⁸²

Meanwhile, the government had curbed the activities of all political parties during the period of the rebellion and had required several parties, including Masjumi and Partai Sosialis Indonesia, to disavow their leaders who had joined the rebellion and to show cause why they should not be dissolved.⁸³ When most of the militantly anti-Communist parties necessarily failed to show cause, they were dissolved. There was some speculation as to whether the government would allow the Liga Demokrasi (Democratic League) to exist as an official opposition to the Gotong Rojong Parliament;⁸⁴ this was a new group formed in March 1960 whose members included some of those who had previously opposed Sukarno in one capacity or another.⁸⁵ In fact, the government did definitely oppose the movement and, effective September 13, 1960, it suspended all political activities in Indonesia.⁸⁶

Leniency Accorded Former Rebels

One of the government's major policies was to treat victims of the rebellions and, indeed, captured or surrendering rebels themselves, with great kindness and leniency. Throughout the period, the government tried to reconstruct areas damaged in fighting. In September 1958 the Indonesian armed forces in West Sumatra made a gift of Rp. 5 million to the government of West Sumatra for reconstruction.⁸⁷ Among other government offers for reconstruction was the allocation of Rp. 108 million for the relief of some million refugees who had been forced to flee because of the rebellions.⁸⁸ The government also made available a credit of Rp. 30 million to North Sulawesi for the repair of communications in the Bolaang Mongondow area which had suffered from the rebels' scorched-earth policy.⁸⁹ Still another fund of Rp. 100 million was announced on April 20, 1960, for the care and rehabilitation of 45,580 converted Darul Islam rebels and their families in South and Southeast Sulawesi.⁹⁰

One of the most humane of the government's policies was announced by Army Chief of Staff Nasution in March 1960: former rebels pardoned by the government would not lose their rights as veterans if they could prove their participation in the earlier Indonesian revolution against the Dutch.⁹¹

A number of amnesty offers were made. The one which received the greatest response was officially made on August 17, 1961, granting amnesty to all rebels and members of armed gangs who surrendered before October 5, 1961. This offer was retroactive to August 1. With the rebel cause already lost, the rumor of this offer was enough to bring an estimated 47,000 surrenders in Sulawesi and about 20,000 in Sumatra, including most of the leaders, by

August 17.⁸² Not only did thousands of rebel troops surrender but so did many rebel leaders, including Col. Alex J. Kawilarang, commander of the Permesta forces, D. J. Somba, Col. Maludin Simbolon, and Darul Islam leader Daud Beureuh.⁸³ In a letter dated August 17, 1961, rebel Premier Sjafruddin Prawiranegara urged that all of his followers who had not yet surrendered should do so; on August 28, he himself surrendered. On September 18, a number of rebels living in Hong Kong, including W. J. D. Pesik, B. H. Maramis, and the widow of Col. Joop F. Warouw (reportedly assassinated in North Sulawesi by his own troops after exhibiting signs of madness) took an oath of loyalty to the Indonesian government. On September 27, Mohammad Natsir also surrendered.⁸⁴ Sumitro fled to Malaya.

Thus the government's regard for Indonesian losses and its apparent willingness to let bygones be bygones in treating former insurgents had a marked effect in bringing the rebellion to a close.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

By October 5, 1961, the insurgency was at a virtual end. Reasons for the rebel failures are hard to evaluate. The fact that South Sumatra, under Colonel Barlian, did not join the rebellion as promised was a major factor counting against the dissidents. The apparent rebel reliance on outside aid helped to destroy their credibility as far as the Indonesian populace was concerned. In turn, the absence of adequate external support foreclosed any military hope they might have had. The lack of internal support, as well as the curious desultoriness on the part of the rebel leaders, seems to have been the last determining circumstance which led to the petering out of the rebellions. In T. S. Eliot's famous phrase, they ended "not with a bang but a whimper."⁸⁵

Reasons for Governmental Success

The government, on the other hand, was fortunate in having the able military leadership of General Nasution during this period. His swift moves immediately after the announcement of the PRRI government in Sumatra deprived it of the chief towns as bases—demoralizing the rebels and preventing any international recognition that might have led to greater support for them. Instead, the insurgents were reduced to the status of marauding groups of guerrillas.

The government's ability to discredit the rebel cause and rally the population to its own side was certainly a major factor in its success. This was accomplished, first, because the government made rebel propaganda boomerang. In many cases the insurgents had managed to compel local support by instilling fear of government troops, but the correct actions of those troops when they reached the villages soon convinced the people that they had much less to fear from the government than from the rebels. Second, the government used the issue of foreign

support to brand the insurgents as unpatriotic and lacking in nationalistic feeling. Indonesia's long and bitter war for independence from the Netherlands was exploited in government slogans against "Western imperialism" and "interference" which began to appear synonymous with the rebel cause. Another factor was the government's clever use of the campaign to gain Irian Barat from the Dutch as propaganda: when the people as a whole rallied to the government's cry to "recover" West New Guinea, the PRRI/Permesta groups were made to appear in the most unpopular light of thwarting the government's efforts to regain its rightful territory.

Perhaps the most important element in the Indonesian government's success in quelling the rebellions was the personality of Sukarno himself. A man of great charisma for the Indonesians, Sukarno rarely failed to charm when he put his mind to it. Although Indonesians might admit their country's dismal economic plight or the problems brought about by such external adventures as the Irian Barat or the later "crush Malaysia" campaigns, these same Indonesians, almost without exception, would still maintain that it was Sukarno who held the country together. It is possible that, if Sukarno had used force alone against the rebels, he would not have succeeded as well as he did by combining military measures with a policy of kindness both toward the population as a whole and toward the returnees, many of whom were, for a time at least, accepted back into government positions.

Economic and Political Aftereffects

Economically of course, the rebellions helped precipitate the disaster into which Indonesia was already falling by the late 1950's. Of the total 1959 budget, in which revenues were estimated at Rp. 24 billion, it was estimated that Rp. 17.6 billion was for defense spending.⁹⁶ During this entire insurgency period, the value of the rupiah declined, government revenues fell, and the budget deficit climbed. The economic decline of Indonesia, already well under way, was accelerated by the need for military counterinsurgency action.

Although the underlying causes of the rebellions, such as economic inequities, regional differences, and "Javanese colonialism," still existed, the government was able after the rebellions to focus attention on other matters. First, there was the Irian Barat campaign to obtain West New Guinea from the Dutch, later the crush-Malaysia campaign, and the tentative beginnings of a crusade to obtain eastern New Guinea from Australia. Little, on the other hand, was accomplished in the way of establishing an efficient administration to govern Indonesia's farflung provinces. Indonesian unity, won during a long and bitter revolution to obtain freedom from the Netherlands, appeared to be maintained mainly by a series of moves to expand the Indonesian empire.

In all of this activity, and particularly from the period of the rebellions, there was a strong residue of anti-Westernism in Indonesia. Since several anti-Communist countries, notably the

United States, were identified with the rebels, they suffered the opprobrium in which the rebel cause was held.

Politically, the net result of the insurgency period was to fragment and vitiate the powers and resources of the anti-Communists, whereas the Indonesian Communists, by giving every evidence of supporting Sukarno's government, were able to seize the opportunities afforded by the situation. The three major forces in Indonesian politics at the end of the rebellions were thus the PKI, the army, and President Sukarno.

The army's role was not unified, since the position of its various leaders toward communism differed and occasionally shifted. General Nasution appeared to become much less militantly opposed to communism, according to observers, partly because of his waning personal power as opposed to the Communist leader Aidit and partly because of Soviet military aid. He devoted his energies to the Irian Barat and crush-Malaysia campaigns. Thus the two other partners in the triumvirate were the major forces at the end of the rebellions.

President Sukarno clearly felt that he could control the situation and any challenge to his power by shifting his support to achieve a working balance. It became evident, however, that the PKI was increasingly able to play the dominant role. In mid-1965, one may only speculate whether the PKI is merely biding its time until it can take over the Indonesian government completely.*

*There was not long to wait. In the fall of 1965, the PKI made its bid for power, but this misfired. By early 1966 the army under General Nasution had clamped down on the Communists; Aidit had disappeared; and President Sukarno, still at the helm, appeared to be subject to considerable army pressure.

NOTES

¹Reba Lewis, Indonesia: Troubled Paradise (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1962); James Mossman, Rebels in Paradise (London: Jonathan Cape, 1961).

²E. H. G. Dobby, Southeast Asia (London: University of London Press, 1950), pp. 197-202.

³Ibid., pp. 252-55.

⁴Ibid., pp. 216-25.

⁵Ibid., pp. 204-208, 253-54.

⁶Leslie H. Palmier, "Indonesia in Turmoil," Manchester Guardian, January 16, 1958.

⁷Terdjamah Atase Pers, speech to Maitland Junior Chamber of Commerce, Canberra, Australia, No. 477/SP/58, June 3, 1958.

⁸See, for example, the discussion of copra smuggling in the Minahasa region of Sulawesi in Herbert Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962), pp. 494-500.

⁹Antara (Indonesian government news agency), April 5, 1958.

¹⁰Ibid., September 2, 1960. This general reduction in yield may have been partly due to land redistribution—in the pre-World War II period there had been 52 estates covering 15,964 hectares.

¹¹Some Aspect [sic] of the Financial Policy of the Djakarta Government: Its impacts [sic] and its relations to the demands put forward by the PRRI. This was a rebel publication (n.d., n.p.) but its figures appear to be borne out by other reports.

¹²D. Sumitro, "Indonesia's Social and Economic Conditions under Sukarno's Rule," The Voice of New Indonesia (PRRI Bulletin) Vol. 1, No. 16, pp. 6 and 9.

¹³On social and cultural aspects of the Minangkabau, see P. E. de Josselin de Jong, Minangkabau and Negri Sembilan: Socio-Political Structure in Indonesia (Jakarta: Bhratara [reprint]), 1960. On Javanese "colonialism" and resentment against it, see Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia, pp. 491-94; and Mossman, Rebels in Paradise, pp. 54-55.

¹⁴Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia, pp. 491-94.

¹⁵Clifford Geertz, The Religion of Java (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1960), *passim*; also articles by Leslie H. Palmier in the Manchester Guardian, January 14, 15, 16, 28, and 29, 1958.

¹⁶Louis Fischer, The Story of Indonesia (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), p. 291.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 225.

¹⁸Gen. Abdul Harris Nasution, quoted in ibid., p. 290.

¹⁹For the Dutch viewpoint, see Dr. G. H. J. van der Molen, "Indonesia and the Republic of the South Moluccas," International Relations (Journal of the David Davies Memorial Institute of International Studies), I (April 1958), 393-400.

²⁰Fischer, The Story of Indonesia, p. 289.

²¹Guy J. Pauker, "The Role of the Military in Indonesia," The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries, ed. John J. Johnson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), pp. 208-209.

²²Ibid., p. 209.

²³Fischer, The Story of Indonesia, p. 221.

²⁴Arnold C. Brackman, Indonesian Communism: A History (New York: Praeger, 1963), pp. 225-28.

²⁵Quoted in ibid., p. 227.

²⁶Fischer, The Story of Indonesia, p. 177.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 223, 293.

²⁸On the government, see The Provisional Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, Act No. 7, 1950 (Gazette 1950, No. 56) and the Elucidation to Act No. 7-1950 (Annex to the Gazette No. 37) [Jakarta: 1950]. On the role of Sukarno, see A. K. Pringgodigdo, The Office of the President in Indonesia as Defined in the Three Constitutions in Theory and Practice, tr. Alexander Brotherton (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1957), especially pp. 42-47.

²⁹Fischer, The Story of Indonesia, pp. 177-80, 237.

³⁰Palmier, "Turmoil in Indonesia," Manchester Guardian, January 15, 1958.

³¹See Dr. Sutan Mohammad Rasjid, The Birth of New Indonesia (Six Months of PRRI) (Commemoration Monograph: Genesis and Development of the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia, issued by the PRRI Mission in Europe, August 15, 1958); also Army Information Service, Now It Can Be Disclosed (Special Issue No. 12, Jakarta: Ministry of Information of the Republic of Indonesia, May 1958), especially pp. 5-6.

³²Col. Rudy Pirngadie, Rebels Without a Cause (The Permesta Affair) (Jakarta: New Nusantara Publishing Co. [1958?]), pp. 4-5.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 6-7.

³⁵Ibid., p. 8; Palmier, "Turmoil in Indonesia"; Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia, pp. 535ff.

³⁶Pauker, "The Role of the Military in Indonesia," pp. 209ff.; Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia, pp. 514ff.; Mossman, Rebels in Paradise, p. 54.

³⁷Col. Rudy Pirngadie speaks of the case of Sumual with some bitterness in Rebels Without A Cause, pp. 3-7.

³⁸Although the council was officially established in May by emergency law, its members were not named until July 11, and it was formally inaugurated on July 12. See Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia, p. 580.

³⁹Rasjid, The Birth of New Indonesia, pp. 17-19; Mossman, Rebels in Paradise, p. 58.

⁴⁰Rasjid, The Birth of New Indonesia, p. 20.

⁴¹Bulletin No. 12, Prime Minister of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations.

⁴²Ministry of Information of the Republic of Indonesia, Special Release No. 5, February 10, 1958.

⁴³Rasjid, The Birth of New Indonesia, p. 51.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 57.

⁴⁵Kawat Direktorat Penerangan, August 28, 1959, Penerangan Pemerintah Indonesia, Djakarta (Djakarta: Indonesian Ministry of Information, 1959).

⁴⁶Trompet Masyarakat (Surabaya, Java), October 14, 1958; Pedoman Rakyat (Makassar, Sulawesi), October 15, 1958.

⁴⁷Interview with Dr. Sumitro, Haagsche Courant (The Hague), May 20-21, 1958.

⁴⁸Home News (Antara), October 4, 1958.

⁴⁹Pauker, "The Role of the Military in Indonesia," p. 212.

⁵⁰Djakarta Dispatches, Vol. II/15, April 7-12, 1961; and Vol. II/25, August 17, 1961.

⁵¹Ibid., Vol. II/25, August 17, 1961.

⁵²Antara, June 21 and June 29, 1960.

⁵³Antara, March 21, 30, and 31; June 28; and August 5 and 20, 1960.

⁵⁴Ibid., July 7, 1960.

⁵⁵Mossman, Rebels in Paradise, pp. 102-103.

⁵⁶Interview with Dr. Sumitro, Haagsche Courant (The Hague), May 20-21, 1958.

⁵⁷Antara, September 27, 1958.

⁵⁸Ibid., July 27, 1960.

⁵⁹Mossman, Rebels in Paradise, pp. 17, 69, 112, 174; The New York Times; William Stevenson, Birds' Nests in Their Beards (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964), pp. 145-46; David Wise and Thomas B. Ross, The Invisible Government (New York: Random House, 1964), pp. 136-46.

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⁶²Home News (Antara), June 10, 1958, and Pedoman Rakyat (Makassar, Sulawesi) July 30, 1959.

⁶³Antara, January 20, 1960.

⁶⁴United Press, March 24, 1958; Lt. Col. Rudy Pirngadie, The "P.R.R.I. Affair" (Djakarta: Nusantara Publishing Co., n.d.), p. 20; Mossman, Rebels in Paradise, pp. 109-10; Army Information Department Release No. 19, March 24, 1958.

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⁶⁶Ibid., and Pirngadie, The "P.R.R.I. Affair," pp. 20-21.

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⁶⁸Ibid., and United Press, March 24, 1958.

⁶⁹Pirngadie, The "P.R.R.I. Affair," pp. 38-41.

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 44ff.; Antara, April 18, 1958.

⁷¹Home News, April 24, 1958; Antara, April 25, 1958.

⁷²On government attitude toward the lack of rebel defense, see Pirngadie, The "P.R.R.I. Affair," pp. 46-47; on the Ambassador's attitude, see Rasjid, The Birth of New Indonesia; on Sumitro's attitude, see interview with Dr. Sumitro, Haagsche Courant (The Hague) May 20-21, 1958.

⁷³Pirngadie, Rebels Without a Cause, pp. 9-12; Arslan Humbaraci, "The Double Fiasco of the Permesta," Antara, June 25, 1958 (one of a series of articles by Humbaraci, a Turkish correspondent who was an eyewitness to much of the Sulawesi operation).

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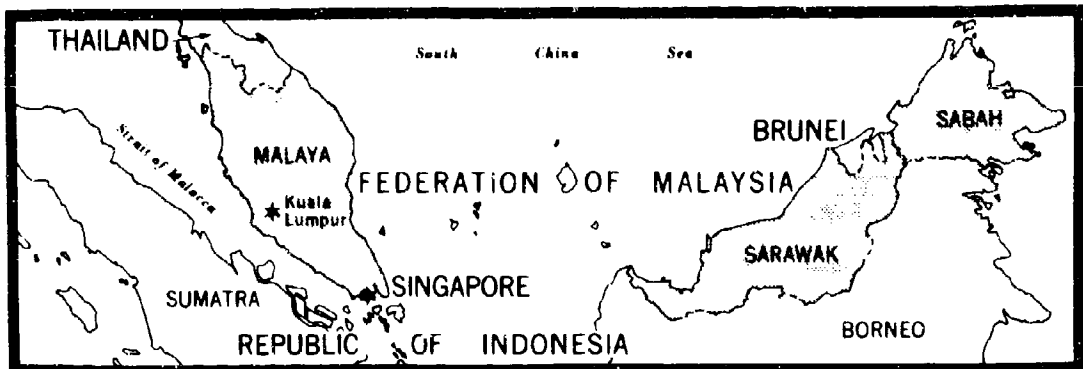
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Chapter Fifteen

**MALAYA
1948-1960**

by Bert H. Cooper, Jr.



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By isolating guerrillas from the civilian population through an intensive, prolonged, and comprehensive campaign of military operations, psychological warfare, and political and social reforms, British Commonwealth forces frustrated a determined attempt by Malayan Chinese Communists to seize power in the classic manner of Mao Tse-tung.

BACKGROUND

Three years after the end of World War II, the British faced in Malaya an outbreak of Communist terrorism that seriously threatened one of the free world's richest raw material producing territories. Along with the air corridors over the jungles of Malaya were among the first battlefields in the cold war. It took more than a decade of guerrilla warfare to defeat the Malayan insurgents in an epic struggle that has come to be regarded as a prototype of successful counterinsurgency.

Situated on a peninsula in Southeast Asia and bordered only by Thailand on the north, Malaya is virtually an island country. Comparable in size to the State of Alabama, it has an area of about 50,600 square miles. Four-fifths of Malaya's terrain is jungle and swampland, and mountain ranges of 6,000 to 7,000 feet run north and south through the interior of the Malay Peninsula. The climate throughout the country is tropical, with little seasonal variation in temperature, humidity, and rainfall.¹

With four-fifths of the country unfit for cultivation and the remainder, though agriculturally fertile, largely given over to highly profitable rubber plantations, Malaya was forced to import two-thirds of its rice and other foodstuffs. There was, however, some subsistence farming, mostly by Malay peasants and Chinese "squatter" farmers, who grew rice and vegetables.² The number of Chinese squatters rose sharply during World War II, when fear of the Japanese, along with food shortages and unemployment in urban areas, drove thousands to seek their livelihood as farmers on the fringes of the jungle, where they occupied land without benefit of title. By 1945 there were probably 400,000 of these squatters.³

Except for tin smelting, industrial development was also very limited in Malaya, and almost all manufactured goods were imported. The commercial sector of the economy was highly developed and largely controlled by Chinese business interests. Malaya's rich rubber plantations and tin mines produced almost half the world output of rubber and around one-third of the world's tin, paying for the country's imports of food and manufactured goods. Malaya's standard of living was in fact among the highest in Asia, and its recovery from the ravages of World War II was relatively quick. The severe economic difficulties of the immediate postwar period, such as food shortages, inflation, and the inevitable black market, were largely settled by 1944.⁴

Ethnic and Social Diversity

At the outbreak of the insurgency in 1948, Malaya's population numbered about five million, and during the next decade was to increase to almost six million. The most densely settled region is the west-coast area, where the urban centers of Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, and Malacca are located.⁵

In 1948 the Malays constituted only 49 percent of Malaya's heterogeneous population. The Chinese community made up 39 percent, and the Indians and Ceylonese were the third most dominant group, comprising over 10 percent. Finally, there were some 14,000 Europeans, 11,000 Eurasians, about 35,000 aboriginal tribesmen, and a sprinkling of other nationalities.⁶ Although the Malays were the dominant ethnic group in the country as a whole, the Chinese greatly outnumbered the Malays in urban areas.

Nowhere was the urban preponderance of the Malayan Chinese more in evidence than in the Crown Colony of Singapore, whose 1947 population of roughly one million was almost 80 percent Chinese. A 200-square-mile island at the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula, Singapore constituted a distinct political entity separate from the Federation of Malaya, although historically and economically it functioned as an integral part of the country. One of the world's major seaports, the city served as the leading commercial center for Malaya.

The problem of communal relations between the indigenous Malay population and the immigrant Chinese and Indian populations has long been the most significant social issue in Malaya. Differences in language, religion, and social customs led to separate schools, segregated residential areas, and distinct sociopolitical organizations for the Malay, Chinese, and Indian communities. The British colonial regime, which had been established throughout Malaya in the years between 1786 and 1914, provided the only common bond that existed among the various peoples.

With the rise of Asian nationalism in the 20th century, Chinese, Indian, and later Malay national consciousness brought latent communal antagonisms to the fore as a major social and political issue. The Japanese occupation (1942-45)* contributed to the further breakdown of

*See ch. 7, "Malaya (1942-1945)."

social cohesion in Malaya. By favoring the Malays and Indians over the Chinese and Eurasians--in a classic policy of "divide and rule"--the Japanese greatly aggravated communal tensions and racial hatreds. These internal differences seriously threatened Malaya's stability in the immediate post-World War II period, when the British undertook to develop an indigenous political structure in which they might eventually invest governmental authority. Intense political rivalry developed, especially between the Malays and the Chinese.⁷

The Chinese in Malaya, like Chinese groups in other Southeast Asian areas, have traditionally remained apart from the indigenous population. Mostly a commercial and urban group, the Malayan Chinese gained an economic predominance over the Malays during the British colonial period. Whether wealthy merchants and owners of tin mines, members of the large professional and entrepreneurial middle class, or poor laborers and squatters, the Chinese were held together by strong ties of national consciousness and racial group identification. As a nation within a nation, the Malayan Chinese felt threatened by the postwar development of Malay nationalism and political advancement.⁸ On the other hand, the Malays resented the traditional economic domination and developing political competition of the Chinese.

Government and Politics

The Federation of Malaya was instituted by the British in February 1948, after a proposed unitary system of government, known as the Union of Malaya, proved to be unworkable as a result of Malay opposition. Under the proposed Union, non-Malay groups would have been given political equality with the indigenous Malay population. This, together with the abrupt manner in which the British went about setting up the Union, so antagonized the Malay elite that most of them refused to serve in the unified colonial administration. Finally, early in 1948, the British yielded to Malay demands for special treatment in Malaya's colonial administration, and a federal system that safeguarded Malay interests was adopted.⁹ The Malay-dominated Federation discriminated against the Chinese with respect to land ownership, citizenship, and political participation. In 1948 less than 20 percent of the Malayan Chinese qualified for citizenship.¹⁰

The Federation of Malaya, the capital of which was Kuala Lumpur, comprised the nine Malay states and the two former Straits Settlements of Penang and Malacca. The third Straits Settlement, Singapore, remained a British crown colony and a separate political entity. The British High Commissioner functioned as the chief executive of the Federation government. He was assisted by the Executive Council, a purely advisory body, and the Legislative Council, which had limited legislative powers and was chosen by limited suffrage to represent the various ethnic communities of Malaya. The individual sultans of the nine Malay states had considerable local authority, especially in religious matters. Malaya was to be prepared, under British tutelage, for self-government at an unspecified future date.¹¹

Although the Federation government enjoyed the popular support of the Malay community, it was bitterly opposed by the Chinese and Indians. In the absence of national elections and parliamentary democracy, political parties functioned as pressure groups and lobbies for communal interests. The composition of the two major political parties in Malaya in 1948—the United Malaya National Organization (UMNO) and the Malayan democratic Union (MDU)—mirrored these interests.

The UMNO, founded in 1946 to oppose the projected Union of Malaya scheme represented conservative, British-educated Malay aristocrats and civil servants. These Malays, who had felt their interests threatened by the earlier proposal for a union, were satisfied that the Federation substantially met their political demands.¹²

The Malayan Democratic Union, a more radical group composed predominantly of Malayan Chinese, opposed the Federation plan and advocated a return to the old plan for a union, with its provision for universal suffrage, parliamentary democracy, and self-government within the British Commonwealth. The MDU later organized the All-Malaya Council of Joint Action (AMCOJA), a loosely organized political coalition opposed to the Federation and comprising such divergent groups as the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the Malayan Communist Party (MCP), the Malayan Indian Congress, and the Malay Nationalist Party, a small leftist Malay faction.¹³

Communist Activities and Aspirations

The basic cause of the Malayan insurgency cannot be sought in either the economic condition of the country or in its political structure and social patterns, despite the considerable hostility between the Malay and Chinese communities. Even the suspension of British rule during the Japanese occupation cannot be cited as the chief cause of the rebellion in 1948. Malaya, unlike Indochina, Indonesia, and Burma, accepted the restoration of European control with relatively good grace. There was almost none of the militant nationalism that developed in other Asian countries occupied by the Japanese. There was, in fact, very little anti-British sentiment in Malayan politics, the central issue of which was Malay-Chinese rivalry rather than a desire for national independence. The placid appearance of the Malayan political scene in the postwar period was deceptive, however, for below the surface the Malayan Communists were planning an armed insurrection.

The roots of the Malayan insurgency go back to the 1920's, when communism was first introduced into the country from China. The Malayan Communist Party (MCP) was always predominantly a Chinese movement, although it never received the support of a majority of the Malayan Chinese. Well organized but generally unappealing to the masses before World War II, the MCP took full advantage of the opportunities afforded by the war to emerge in Malayan Chinese eyes as the liberator of the country.¹⁴

In the postwar period, the Communists avoided total disarmament by the returning British. Pretending in December 1945 to demobilize the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army, as the

resistance force was called, the Communists kept lists of names, maintained a shadow organization, and concealed camps and supply dumps, ready to resume operations when the opportunity arose. They were able to keep an underground force of about 4,000 men, and also kept in touch with ex-guerrillas through a veterans' organization known as the Old Comrades' Association.¹⁵

Now for the first time a legal political party with about 3,000 members, the MCP also enjoyed a popularity enhanced by its wartime record and the successes of the Communists on mainland China. It was attractive to many middle-class Malayan Chinese who had been economically ruined during the war. The Communists concentrated on organizing and controlling labor unions; by 1948 they maintained control over an estimated 60 percent of Malaya's unions. The party also infiltrated non-Communist political groups that opposed the federal system of government desired by the Malays, although it was never able to control them.¹⁶

Despite its successes, the party was plagued with internal problems. Internal dissatisfaction developed because of the growing disparity in the living conditions of officials and the rank-and-file membership. In addition, a leadership fight broke out. Loi Tak, Secretary General and a wartime leader of guerrilla forces, was attacked for his moderation in the postwar period and accused of having been in the pay of the Japanese. In March 1947, he absconded with most of the party's funds, never to be heard of again. Ch'en P'ing, another wartime leader, took control of the party. The upturn in the Malayan economy drained off prospective members, a circumstance that seriously impeded the establishment of the mass party desired by the MCP elite.¹⁷

Early in 1948 the MCP, which had previously favored both legal political agitation and subversive infiltration of labor and political organizations, called for open rebellion and guerrilla operations—a major shift in the party line which not all leaders supported. This decision is believed by many sources to have originated in a conference of Asian Communists held in Calcutta during February 1948.¹⁸ But conditions in Malaya itself may also have prompted the MCP to adopt more radical tactics. By 1948 the Communists were beginning to lose some of their prestige and influence. The decision to take up arms may have thus been viewed by Ch'en P'ing as a means of restoring to the party that cohesion and revolutionary elan which was being dissipated in Malaya's prosperous peacetime society.

INSURGENCY

In the spring of 1948, the MCP initiated a series of assassinations directed mainly against pro-Kuomintang Chinese and British rubber planters. In June, the harassed government declared a state of emergency. The MCP was thus forced to move from sporadic acts of terrorism into organized guerrilla warfare. MCP strategy, patterned closely after the protracted war

concept of Mao Tse-tung, was (1) to paralyze Malaya's economy, (2) to drive the British out of the countryside and back into the cities, and (3) to establish "liberated areas" under permanent Communist control from which to operate during the final phase of the campaign. Captured documents later indicated that the MCP actually planned to declare a Communist Republic of Malaya a few months after the outbreak of hostilities.¹⁹ In all three of their strategic objectives the Communists were unsuccessful. Mao's "final phase" — in which the insurgents would act as conventional forces operating from secure bases and engaging the enemy in large-scale, positional warfare — never was reached.²⁰

Guerrilla tactics were employed at all times, with hit-and-run attacks on isolated police stations, rubber plantations, tin mines, and moving vehicles. Personnel were killed and weapons and money were stolen; on plantations, rubber trees were slashed and latex stolen or destroyed. This use of indiscriminate terrorism, and especially the destruction of rubber trees, alienated an already apathetic public. In 1951-52, the insurgents began to use terrorism more selectively, concentrating on Europeans, government officials, members of the police and armed forces, and Malayan Chinese who refused to cooperate with the MCP.²¹

Insurgent Organization and Deployment of Forces

The insurgents were organized into a military force which first called itself the Malayan People's Anti-British Army, after the fashion of its Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA) of World War II. After 1949, it became the Malayan Races Liberation Army (MRLA). Its underground political movement was known by the Chinese name of Min Yuen (derived from Min Chung Yuen Tong, meaning "people's movement"). Only about a third of the guerrillas were Communist Party members, but MCP officials held all key commands in MRLA units and effectively controlled the Min Yuen. The MCP also operated a terrorist unit, known as the Blood and Steel Corps, which performed robberies, liquidated enemies of the party, and blackmailed and intimidated non-Communists into providing money and intelligence.²²

In addition to furnishing MRLA units with food and other supplies, the Min Yuen gathered information and operated an intelligence network and courier system for the MCP. Responsible for developing close ties between the guerrillas and the civilian masses, the Min Yuen organized the population, setting up local organizations such as peasants' unions, "liberation leagues," women's unions, and armed self-protection corps. These corps functioned as part-time guerrilla units and provided recruits for the MRLA.²³

At the beginning of the insurgency, the MRLA was organized along conventional lines, with regiments, battalions, and companies; however, the strength of these units varied widely. As pressure from counterinsurgent forces increased, this strict organizational structure broke down and had to be replaced by a decentralized system of independent companies and platoons,

which sometimes were still called regiments. By late 1951, the guerrillas had 12 independent forces, numbering from 200 to 400 men each, plus support elements.²⁴

One or more MRLA units operated in each of the Malay states. According to a source published in 1954, these were located as follows: the 1st Regiment in Selangor; the 2d in Negri Sembilan; the 3d, 4th, and 9th in Johore; parts of the 5th (one of the strongest) operating in both Perak and Kelantan; the 6th, 7th, and 10th (a Malay unit) in Pahang; and the 8th in Kedah.²⁵ Interestingly enough, the first eight of these "regiments" operated in the same general areas where, in World War II, the eight independent forces of the MPAJA had operated.

Ch'en P'ing and Guerrilla Leadership

The Malayan Communist movement never produced a single overwhelmingly important leader on the order of Mao Tse-tung or Ho Chi Minh. MPAJA veteran Ch'en P'ing, * as Secretary General of the MCP and, after Loi Tak's ignominious departure, the leading Communist in Malaya, functioned as commanding general of the guerrilla forces. The son of a prosperous Chinese bicycle manufacturer in Perak, Ch'en P'ing had been well liked by the British officers who worked with him during World War II. They had hoped that he would give up his Communist activities and go into his family's business after the war ended.

Appointment to the MCP Central Committee in 1946, however, brought Ch'en P'ing, at the age of 25, into the highest Malayan Communist circles. He became a dedicated and militant party leader. When the revolt broke out, the British Government cancelled its award of the Order of the British Empire for Ch'en P'ing's services in the war; eventually it offered a reward of 30,000 pounds sterling (\$84,000) for his capture. As late as 1965, he and his wife were believed still to be in the deep Pahang or across the border in Thailand, where the MCP Central Committee and headquarters were also thought to be hiding.²⁶

The MCP recognized as a weakness the fact that it had no regular army cadres and no commanders who were graduates of military schools or experienced in conventional military operations. Some 60 percent of the MRLA guerrillas were World War II MPAJA veterans; however, since MPAJA had fought very few military operations, concentrating more on building up its political base among the Chinese villagers and squatters, these veterans' combat experience was probably quite limited. Furthermore, a number of MRLA's best qualified officers were killed during the first few months of the revolt. Throughout the twelve years of the insurgency, leadership remained a constant problem.²⁷

Strengths, Casualties, and Composition of Insurgent Forces

Initial MRLA troop strength was difficult to determine, and original British estimates ranged from 3,000 to 4,000. Interviews later held with surrendered guerrillas indicated that

*Other names used by Ch'en P'ing include Chin Peng, Wong Ping, and Wong Mun-wei.

most of them had been in the jungle since 1948, and MRLA strength estimates were then revised upward to as high as 8,000 to 10,000. Most sources estimate MRLA strength at the peak of guerrilla activity in 1951-52 to have been under 8,000 and possibly as low as 5,000 active guerrillas. By June 1957, the estimated strength was less than 2,000, and by mid-1962 fewer than 500 MCP guerrillas were thought to be still in the jungle near or beyond the Thai border. The strength of the Min Yuen was more difficult to gauge and estimates varied from 15,000 to 35,000.²⁸

During the first four years from 1948 to 1952, over 3,000 guerrillas were killed, some 1,500 were wounded, and approximately 2,000 were either captured or surrendered to government forces.²⁹ In 1951-52, more than 1,000 guerrillas were killed. After this, the insurgents' casualty rate declined, but their overall troop strength also fell as recruitment slackened. By August 1957, when Malaya became fully independent, a total of some 10,000 guerrillas had been killed, captured, or induced to surrender, and nearly 3,000 had been wounded.³⁰ Casualties in the last three years (1957-60) were insignificant except for a greatly increased surrender rate as the movement crumbled.

Ninety-five percent of the Malayan Races Liberation Army were Malayan Chinese. Perhaps 40 percent of the guerrillas spoke the Hakka, or Kheh, dialect of South China; about 20 percent spoke Hylam, the Hainan Island dialect; and the rest spoke a variety of other Chinese dialects. Since the Hakkas comprised only a fifth of Malaya's Chinese population and the Hylams a much smaller proportion, these two groups were overrepresented in the MCP. The ratio of men to women in the MRLA was about ten to one, and most guerrillas were between 20 and 35 years of age.

Motivation, Training, and Indoctrination

A large number of those who went into the jungle in 1948 were motivated by fear that they might be arrested for previous political activity in the MCP and Communist-front labor unions, or that they might face reprisals from the MCP if they refused to join in the rebellion. Others were influenced by such factors as Communist successes in China and the charisma of Mao Tse-tung, the glamor of participation in a resistance movement with international implications, and the personal status that this politico-military activity conferred on those who took part. In the 1948-52 period, communism seemed to many Asians to be the wave of the future and there was a certain bandwagon effect on which the MCP was able to capitalize. But later, when the Communists suffered reverses or accepted partial victories, as in Korea and Indochina, recruitment fell off and defections increased.³¹

Particularly in the early period (1948-50), when the MRLA was able to maintain large, well-constructed jungle camps, there was an intensive training program for guerrilla fighters. Regular hours were observed in the larger camps, with reveille at 0530 and a daily schedule

which normally included two hours of military drill and field exercises and two hours of classroom instruction in the morning, then three hours of camp duties and more drill in the afternoon.³²

Combat training in MRLA camps consisted of weapons drill, dry-fire exercises (to conserve ammunition), and field exercises in jungle warfare tactics. As one ex-guerrilla reminisced, "we used to race up and down hills, climb trees, and practice jungle ambush positions."³³ According to this source, classes were held on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings in "such subjects as map reading, how to compare our own strength and the enemy's, how the Russian Army fought, how the Chinese Communist Army fought, and the general principles of guerrilla warfare, such as to strike only at the enemy's weak points, avoid major battles, save your own ammunition, and capture the enemy's ammunition."³⁴ An emphasis on discipline pervaded the Communist training program, which regulated all details of life, ranging from such specifics as "Go every day to the latrine, which must be far away from camp" to such general political platitudes as "Live and work for the benefit of all."³⁵

Some 60 percent of the guerrilla trainee's day was supposed to be devoted to political lectures, according to MCP directives. On Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday, the morning classes were devoted to lectures on communism and current international events. A two-hour evening session was devoted to political indoctrination and psychological conditioning. This evening session was largely devoted to "self-criticism" and "mutual criticism" by the guerrillas, devices intended to smoke out morale and personality problems in the camps and to resolve them through group pressure upon the offending individuals. A guerrilla was expected to criticize not only himself and his comrades but also his superior officers. Officers were not supposed to punish subordinates who criticized them during this supposedly privileged period.³⁶

Military Operations and Tactics

Combat operations never involved large numbers of guerrillas. An analysis of more than 100 MRLA operations during 1948-50, when unit strengths were highest, showed that the largest single action involved a guerrilla force of only 300 men and that the smallest was the work of one or two guerrillas, the average action being performed by 56 men. By 1954, bands of over 25 men were rare. Types of guerrilla action included raids on rubber and tin estates (25 percent of all actions), road ambushes (16 percent), and murder (15.5 percent). Robbery, sabotage, and skirmishes with security forces each represented about 10 percent; raids on police stations and the throwing of grenades each represented around 6 percent of guerrilla operations.³⁷

Most raids on police stations were against small local precincts, and were for the purpose of obtaining arms. Sabotage was directed primarily against railroad lines, local railroad stations, and locomotives, but occasionally telephone wires were cut and local water supplies

destroyed. Rubber trees were another favorite target for sabotage, and hundreds of thousands of trees were destroyed before the guerrillas realized that this tactic was alienating the civilian population, for whom, as the Communists were so often disillusioned to discover, the means of earning a living meant more than politics.

Logistical Problems Affect Morale

As the guerrillas were forced to exchange the comforts of their large permanent camps for the security of smaller, temporary campsites deeper in the jungle, troop morale began to suffer. An early source of discontent among the rank and file of the MRLA concerned its change in leave policy: in the first year of the emergency guerrillas were permitted to go home on leave, but later, when some failed to return, this privilege was withdrawn. The leaders' appropriation of food and women also caused bad feeling among the men. As chances of a Communist victory appeared more and more remote, guerrilla morale worsened. By 1954 several Communist leaders had been killed by their own men.³⁸ The rise in the surrender rate was another indication of the Communists' failure to retain the loyalty of their followers: by the end of 1955, some 1,700 had surrendered, as compared to a total of 1,169 captured.³⁹

The failure of the MRLA to solve its logistical problems prevented it from mounting a sustained military offensive. The Communists expected the Min Yuen to procure food and supplies in the settled areas of the country and transport these to the guerrilla camps in the jungle areas, but the system proved to be much too crude and unpredictable. As MRLA units withdrew deeper into the jungle, their logistical difficulties were compounded. Some sources feel that the logistical troubles of the MRLA might be traced to the fact that the Malayan Communists slavishly followed Mao Tse-tung's precepts regarding the importance of the rural hinterland as a secure base for military operations against government-held cities and outposts. But the sparsely settled and inhospitable jungles of Malaya were not comparable in strategic importance to China's agriculturally productive rural areas with their teeming millions of peasants. The jungle had nothing to offer the guerrillas except temporary refuge from government forces who controlled the populated areas of Malaya at all times during the insurgency.⁴⁰

Sources of Supply and Intelligence

The insurgents were initially able to draw on a number of lost supply drops from World War II days and the caches of arms and materiel which the MCP had secreted in preparation for the revolt. Another source was raids on trucks carrying food and war materiel inland from Singapore. Foreign assistance was never available in significant amounts. At first the MRLA received an unknown amount of military goods from Communist China via the Thai border and by sea, but counterinsurgent measures shut off this source of supply. One advantage in obtaining recruits, weapons, and supplies locally was, of course, that this involved the indigenous

population more directly in the insurgency. Once a villager had given food, money, or supplies to the guerrillas, he was committed and could be blackmailed to give further aid.⁴¹

Most of the guerrillas' food was obtained from Chinese squatters living on the fringes of the jungle. It was this vital source which the government's resettlement program and stringent food control measures were to cut into, forcing the guerrillas to plant vegetable gardens in jungle clearings. Unfortunately for the insurgents, however, these clearings made excellent aerial targets, and by 1952 food was a major problem for the MRLA. Manpower needed for combat had to be used instead to forage for food and the basic necessities of life. To sustain his health, each guerrilla needed about five pounds of rice per week. Pressing need led the guerrillas to resort to coercion and terrorism against the civilian population, and this in turn cost the Communist movement the popular support it so badly needed for survival.⁴²

Aboriginal tribesmen provided some support for MRLA units forced back into the deep jungle after about 1950. A directive issued by the Malayan Politburo in July 1951 ordered MCP state committees to organize and gain control of the aborigines through the formation of Asal ("Aboriginal" in Malay) Protection Corps in each area. By a combination of terrorism and propaganda, the Communist-controlled corps got these simple people to grow food for the guerrillas, to serve as scouts and guides, and to give warnings when government troops were in the area. For example, the Senoi people provided some aid to the guerrillas. The Senoi—subdivided into the Semai tribe of some 11,000 in Perak and Pahang, and the Temiar tribe of about 8,000 in Perak and Kelantan—are the largest aboriginal group in Malaya, inhabiting the rugged mountainous jungles in the center of the country.⁴³

The insurgents derived their finances initially from the funds of the MCP and Communist-controlled labor unions. Later, the Min Yuen extorted funds from Chinese merchants, landowners, and tin mine owners and "taxed" workers and squatters in guerrilla-dominated territory. The Protection Corps killed those who refused to pay, and by 1951 the MRLA was making raids on villages to collect money, as well as food and supplies. The sale of stolen latex (unprocessed rubber) was another source of insurgent funds.⁴⁴

The Communists developed a reasonably efficient intelligence network. The Min Yuen carried on intelligence operations among the Chinese in all the major cities of Malaya. The police, most of whom were Malays, had difficulty in penetrating the Communist espionage system until after 1952, when local Chinese were taken into the Special Branch of the police. The insurgents also made good use of Chinese squatters and, later, of aboriginal tribesmen as sources of information.⁴⁵

Communication and Coordination

Guerrilla units were always seriously hampered in their tactical operations by communication difficulties, which made coordinated action impossible. Radio equipment was almost

completely lacking; therefore the party had to rely upon couriers, with a conspicuous lack of success. Messages setting forth major policy decisions were sometimes a year late in reaching their destinations.⁴⁶

Because of these deficiencies in communication, the MCP adopted a quota system for assigning military operations. At the annual meetings of the MCP Politburo, quotas were established for each type of military operation to be performed throughout the country in the following year; state and district quotas were then assigned. An obvious weakness of the system lay in the tendency of unit commanders to overfill quotas for the easier operations in order to compensate for their failures to carry out more dangerous assignments. Also, with local commanders free to meet their quotas at moments of their own choosing, no concerted and systematic attack against a particular key target was possible.⁴⁷ Cumbersome and inefficient as the quota system was, it is difficult to think of an alternative available to the MCP, given its lack of adequate communications. It was only by such improvisations that the MRLA maintained itself in the field for over a decade.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

British intelligence sources warned in the spring of 1948 that the sudden wave of violence and banditry then sweeping Malaya was a prelude to a Communist-led general uprising. The first public notice of the situation came on June 6, when Commissioner-General Malcolm MacDonald observed that the Communists were "making a desperate effort to impose the rule of the knife and gun in plantations, mines and factories."⁴⁸ A number of anti-Communist Chinese leaders and European planters and estate managers were murdered in June, and the public demanded that the government take steps to check the mounting terror.

On June 16, a state of emergency was declared throughout the Federation. Police raids against known Communist headquarters on June 21 led to the arrest of some 600 suspects, although most of the MCP leaders had already gone into prearranged jungle hiding places when the police struck. On June 24, the emergency was extended to include Singapore, and in early July the MCP and its front organizations were officially banned in both the Federation and the crown colony.⁴⁹

The proclamation of a state of emergency brought into effect a series of regulations designed to aid the government in reestablishing control and stamping out the insurgency. The much-used Regulation 17, for example, provided for detention without trial of anyone suspected of aiding persons taking part in Communist activities; it also contained provisions for the deportation of aliens and the detention of persons in rehabilitation centers for a period of eight months to a year. Other regulations made the unauthorized possession of weapons and the procurement of supplies for the guerrillas punishable by death, and the entire population over

the age of 12 was required to register with the local police, who issued identity cards bearing thumb prints and photographs.⁵⁰ Emergency regulations were added as necessary and revoked when possible; they enabled the government to act with precision and dispatch and were of undoubted value to the counterinsurgency campaign.⁵¹

Holding the Line in 1948

There was no integrated strategy of counterinsurgent operations in the first two years of the emergency but the police and armed forces were enlarged as rapidly as possible. By August 1948, an infantry battalion arrived from Hong Kong, and in October an elite Guards brigade arrived from Britain.

Special forces units, known as Ferret Forces, were made up of volunteers from the Regular Army and included Malays, Gurkhas, Chinese, Dyaks, * and Europeans familiar with the country and languages. Ferret Force groups were trained by the Malay Regiment at Port Dickson. There were eventually six groups in operation, each numbering around 80 officers and men, with a total strength of under 500.⁵² The Special Constabulary was also formed to augment the self-defense forces which both European and Chinese planters and miners had assembled to protect their lives and property.

There was no terrorist activity in the large cities; the rubber plantations and tin mines, along with small police and railway stations in the interior, became the "front lines" of the Malayan campaign. As quickly as possible, arms were made available to estate managers and mine operators, who bore the brunt of the guerrilla attacks.⁵³ These men "lived with revolvers under their pillows," wrote one source. "Their bungalows were floodlit at night and protected by barbed wire, and they hired armed Malay guards. The estate automobile was often turned into a homemade armored car. The planter drove around his estate with a heavily armed escort, and if he were wise he never used the same route twice in succession."⁵⁴ When reinforcements arrived from other parts of the British Commonwealth, this system of static defense was supplemented by military patrols and police raids into guerrilla-infested districts.

By the end of 1948 it was clear that the government was holding the insurgents at bay, although no one expected a swift and final defeat of the guerrilla movement. Malaya's administrative apparatus never broke down completely even in the interior; there were never any "liberated areas" in which the MCP held sway openly and continuously for any period of time. Much of the credit for this early success belongs to the planters and miners, who with the help of their foremen and overseers held their ground and thus frustrated the guerrillas' prime strategic objective of controlling the countryside.⁵⁵

*Natives of nearly Borneo.

Early Leaders—Gurney, Gray, and Briggs

The British were fortunate to have available a number of highly competent leaders. In the initial phase, three top officials were responsible for political, security, and military matters. Sir Henry Gurney, High Commissioner; Col. William Gray, Commissioner of Police; and Lt. Gen. Sir Harold Briggs, Director of Operations.

High Commissioner Sir Henry Gurney, who arrived in Malaya in October 1948, was a man of considerable diplomatic skill and personal courage. On his frequent trips into the interior Sir Henry insisted that his vehicle always fly the Federation pennant. By thus "showing the flag," at great personal risk, he hoped to inspire confidence in the government and keep up morale. On October 6, 1951, his motor car was ambushed; Sir Henry was killed when he left the car and walked toward the guerrillas, apparently to draw their fire away from his wife and aides in the stalled vehicle. Although the morale of government forces suffered momentarily, the shock effect which Gurney's heroic death had on the British and Malayan public at large actually aided the counterinsurgent effort by dramatizing the seriousness of the situation.⁵⁶

The termination of Britain's involvement in Palestine in 1948 had permitted personnel from the Palestine Police Force to be transferred to Malaya. One of these, Col. William Gray, served as Commissioner of Police in the Federation from July 1948 to the end of 1951. It is generally acknowledged that Colonel Gray and his colleagues from Palestine did a good job of strengthening a badly organized police force, although they were unpopular with the local police, who resented them as outsiders. Gray was instrumental in obtaining additional weapons and the radio equipment with which to create a Federation-wide police radio network. Unfortunately, Gray's personality did not make for close collaboration with the armed forces and the Director of Operations.⁵⁷

In March 1949, the British Government appointed Lt. Gen. Sir Harold Briggs, a retired army officer of Burma fame and an expert in jungle warfare, to work directly under the High Commissioner as a civilian Director of Operations. To coordinate the counterinsurgent operations of armed forces, police, and government Briggs established a Federal War Council; he also ordered the creation of State War Executive Committees (SWECS) and District War Executive Committees (DWECS). Each of these committees contained representatives of the civil government, the police, and the military, who worked together as a triumvirate. The daily meetings of these SWECS and DWECS, called "morning prayers" by the British, served as informal planning sessions for each day's activities.⁵⁸ Joint police-army operations rooms were also established in every district.⁵⁹

The Briggs Plan

By June 1950, Briggs had evolved an integrated plan of antiguerrilla operations, a program which was continued throughout the emergency. The strategy of the Briggs Plan was to deny the

guerrillas access to their chief source of supply and intelligence--the civilian population. This involved the resettlement of half a million Chinese squatters living on the fringe of the jungle, the regrouping of mine and estate laborers, and the enforcement of stringent security measures to prevent Min Yuen agents in urban and plantation areas from getting food and information to the guerrillas operating in the jungle. Unable to obtain food from nearby squatter farms, the guerrillas were to be forced to come out into the open, where they could be attacked by government forces.⁶⁰

Although he was never fully satisfied with the executive powers given him as Director of Operations—he had no direct control over the Federation's police system, for instance—Briggs nonetheless succeeded in laying the foundation for eventual victory over the MCP. When he left Malaya at the expiration of his appointment late in 1951, General Briggs left behind a workable program of counterguerrilla action. He died, an exhausted man, a few months later.

Templer Combines Civil and Military Authority

In January 1952, Gen. Sir Gerald Templer was appointed High Commissioner of the Federation. The first military man ever to occupy this political post, Templer served simultaneously as Director of Operations during the two and one-half years he was in Malaya.* The appointment of a military man to the Federation's highest political post underscored the government's belief that, to avoid the coordination problems encountered by Briggs, there should be no division between military and civil authority and that responsibility for both military and civil operations should be vested in one man.

"A brilliant man with ideas, inflexible determination, great driving force, and a temperament that did not suffer fools gladly,"⁶¹ Templer successfully implemented the Briggs Plan, bringing his own personal touch to the psychological warfare aspects of the campaign. The General's incessant travels about the country, making inspection tours and holding personal conferences with local commanders and officials, had a positive influence on public morale. Templer's personal strategy for winning "the hearts and minds of the Malayan people," as he liked to describe his mission in Malaya, involved harsh treatment of villagers and individuals caught collaborating with the guerrillas, combined with positive incentives for those who cooperated with the government. He laid great stress on Malayan participation in local government.

When General Templer left Malaya in June 1954, he was succeeded politically by his Deputy High Commissioner, D. C. MacGillivray, a Colonial Office civil servant. Gen. Sir Geoffrey Bourne, already General Officer Commanding, Malaya, assumed Templer's military post as Director of Operations. Thus military and political matters were again separately

*Sir Rob Lockhart served as interim Director of Operations for a few months in 1951 until General Templer arrived.

administered. By this time the crisis period of the emergency had passed, although the campaign was to continue for six more years.⁶²

Organization, Deployment, and Mission of Forces

During the emergency, counterinsurgent forces consisted of the entire Malayan police system and the various British troop units deployed in Malaya. The Malayan police force was organized into three main elements: the Regular Police, which performed routine police duties; the Special Constabulary, organized into some 800 area security units (of about 25 men each), which secured their areas by both stationary guards and patrols up to the jungle fringes; and the Field Force, a paramilitary force which patrolled the Thai border and manned the deep jungle forts.⁶³ Diplomatic agreements with the government of Thailand in 1949 gave them blanket permission to pursue guerrillas 10 miles across the border.⁶⁴

In principle the armed forces were there to reinforce the local police, each major police force being supported by a military unit varying in size from company to battalion or even brigade. Generally speaking, jungle areas were under the operational control of the military forces, while urban and plantation areas were the responsibility of the police. The police patrolled the Thai border and, after 1952, maintained garrisons among the aborigines in the deep jungle.

Early in the emergency it was decided that intelligence work should be a function of the police rather than the armed forces. Since policemen normally remained in the same locality, they were able to build up the intelligence picture for their areas over a long period of time. The agency responsible for collecting, collating, and disseminating intelligence data was the Special Branch of the Regular Police Force. Liaison between the Special Branch and the armed forces was maintained through Military Intelligence Officers (MIOS), who worked in Special Branch offices, and through daily meetings of SWECS and DWECS. In 1952, Chinese agents were added to the Special Branch. Able to penetrate the Communist network, these Chinese agents proved extremely valuable in obtaining the information necessary for effective operations.⁶⁵

Strength of Forces and Tie-Down Ratios

At the outbreak of the revolt there were about 10,000 police in the Federation; these were increased to some 75,000 in the Regular Police and Special Constabulary. From the original 12 battalions of Gurkha, Malay, and British troops, probably numbering around 9,000 men, troop strength increased to nearly 40,000. This figure included 25,000 men from Britain (some of whom were Royal Navy and Royal Air Force personnel), 10,500 Gurkhas, and five battalions of the Malay Regiment, as well as contingents of colonial and commonwealth troops. In addition, there was also a 250,000 man Home Guard.⁶⁶

Various estimates have been made of the throw-down ratio of government forces to insurgents. According to one source, the ratio in some districts was as high as 60 armed men for every known guerrilla;⁶⁷ another estimate was 24 troops to 1 guerrilla.⁶⁸ One expert has suggested that it would be more realistic to balance, on the one hand, the 8,000 or more infantry, rifle-men and policemen actually operating in the jungles against an approximately equal number of guerrillas at the peak of the insurgency, and, on the other hand, to balance the some 300,000 soldiers, policemen, and other auxiliaries supporting and supplying the combatants and controlling the civilian population against the 500,000 or so Chinese villagers who functioned in a similar support capacity for the guerrillas.⁶⁹ The cost of killing one guerrilla was estimated at an average of 700 man-hours of patrolling, ambushing, and open fighting.⁷⁰

Jungle Patrols and Food-Denial Operations

Military operations in Malaya consisted largely of combat patrols by squads or platoons and sometimes companies. Patrols of company size would normally remain in the jungle for rather long periods, forming a base camp out of which squads or platoons could operate in several directions.⁷¹ In dense jungle a patrol might be able to move only 500 yards in an hour, but on a rubber estate they might cover 2 miles in the same time. Once a military unit had gotten the "feel" of an area through routine patrolling on little or no information (termed by the British "jungle bashing"), patrolling could then be limited to operations based on intelligence or in support of overall military operations.⁷²

The one operation the British found "utterly useless" was "flogging the jungle without information by large numbers of troops."⁷³ Best results were obtained when a small body of men went on patrol backed up by a great deal of prior planning, coordination, and intelligence work. On such patrols, one group might attack a guerrilla camp while others lay in wait to ambush fleeing guerrillas.⁷⁴

Given only a brief orientation and training period in Malaya, European soldiers were at first unskilled in the ways of the jungle. To overcome this handicap, the British imported, from nearby North Borneo and Sarawak, a number of Dyak tribesmen as trackers and scouts for government patrols. These men, members of headhunting tribes, were able to read such signs as bent twigs and turned leaves—things which were meaningless to the European unfamiliar with the jungle. A battalion made up of Fiji Islanders was also helpful in jungle operations.⁷⁵ The best guides, however, were ex-guerrillas, who often led patrols into jungle camps from which they had fled only hours before. Government forces gained the offensive by about 1952, when they were increasingly able to employ tactics of surprise assault and ambush.

The most successful operations in Malaya, according to one veteran company commander, were those aimed at denying foodstuff to the guerrillas.⁷⁶ In June 1951, with Operation STARVATION, General Briggs instituted stringent regulations to control the movement of food,

medicine, and other supplies which the guerrillas needed. Operation STARVATION did not work very well at first, owing to the ineffectiveness of the Home Guards and Special Constables at the local level, however, as enforcement procedures were improved, the guerrillas began to feel the pinch. Concentrated food-denial operations were undertaken jointly by police and army units in one district after another.⁷⁷

Treatment of Civilian Population

A vital part of the food-denial program was the identification of villagers who were supplying food to the guerrillas. When enough evidence had been collected to show conclusively that a villager was a supplier, he was discreetly confronted with this evidence by a Chinese detective from the Special Branch and given the opportunity of redeeming himself in the eyes of the government by becoming an informer. If he agreed to become a double-agent, he would continue to smuggle foodstuff to the Communists while providing precise information on the movements of the guerrillas. If, on the other hand, he fled to the jungles, as many did, the Communists lost a source of supply and gained another mouth to feed. This kind of "blackmail" by the police, combined with a system of generous rewards, turned many village food smugglers into government agents, with excellent results for intelligence.⁷⁸

When an area had been cleared of guerrillas, it was declared a "White Area" and emergency regulations, including the unpopular food control measures, were lifted. If any area was reinfiltrated by guerrillas, the regulations and controls were to be reimposed. This gave the civilian population a definite incentive to cooperate with the government. Malacca was declared the first "White Area" in 1954. By the end of 1955, there were large extensions of the White Areas, particularly in Kelantan, Trengganu, and Pahang.⁷⁹ Hard-core areas of guerrilla infestation in Johore and Perak, however, were not declared White Areas until 1960.

Collective punishment was sometimes imposed on villages suspected of aiding guerrillas in the area, after the villagers had refused to cooperate with government forces. This method was frequently employed by General Templer. One well-known case was that of Tanjong Malim, a village of 20,000, long suspected of aiding the insurgents, where a particularly heinous attack on a civic action party laying a water pipe to serve the village occurred. Templer summoned the leaders of the community before him, told them he held them responsible for the ambush, and imposed a 22-hour-a-day curfew; the rice ration was cut in half; and questionnaires were distributed to each house. Unsigned replies led to the arrest of some 40 Chinese suspected of being Min Yuen couriers or food suppliers, and Tanjong Malim soon became one of the safest towns in Malaya. Another form of collective punishment was the levying of collective fines, as in the case of Pusing in Perak, which was fined \$3,000 for its record of 87 guerrilla incidents in the area.⁸⁰

Although Tempier's treatment of Tanjong Malim was sharply criticized in the House of Lords and the Manchester Guardian called it "odious," the Colonial Secretary supported Tempier, and the British press in general approved of his policies in Malaya. A number of other reprisals occurred in 1952-53 before Emergency Regulation 171A, under which collective punishment had been administered, was finally revoked in late 1953.⁸¹

"Jungle Forts" and Air Operations

Another successful undertaking was the establishment of "jungle forts" among the aboriginal Senoi tribesmen of Pahang and Kelantan to deny even this remote area to the guerrillas. Beginning early in 1952, garrisons of the Police Field Force were set up in the ulu, as the Malays call the deep jungle, to serve as permanent bases for patrols in the area and, with the help of anthropologists and field assistants from the Federation's Department of Aborigines, to operate trading posts and medical centers for the tribes. About 15 jungle forts were built, and by 1955 the Communist hold over the tribes had been broken. Not only did these outposts provide protection from the Communists, but they brought, in the form of medical treatment and primary education, the first rudiments of civilization that these primitive people had ever known.⁸²

Malaya's better-than-average road system and transportation facilities substantially aided the counterinsurgent effort. However, once the guerrilla war moved into the jungle, helicopters became indispensable for rapid movement of troops, casualty evacuation, and supplying jungle forts. The No. 348 Naval Helicopter Squadron and the No. 155 Squadron of the Royal Air Force (RAF) operated helicopters at the height of the emergency and supported the Army's 22d Special Air Service Regiment. The RAF developed supply dropping in the jungle to a fine art, and this enabled troops on patrol in the jungle to keep on the trail of guerrillas for days on end.⁸³ The air force also provided reconnaissance support for ground forces on patrol. Aerial photography was widely used for intelligence purposes; and aircraft were also used in psychological warfare operations.

Tactical air operations against guerrilla personnel proved generally disappointing, however, both in the number of casualties inflicted and in the psychological effects of such operations, which too frequently resulted in civilian casualties. The RAF once estimated that each bombing attack on what was supposed to be a guerrilla campsite killed one-third of one guerrilla.⁸⁴

More effective were air attacks on the MRLA's jungle encampments, which early in the emergency deprived the guerrilla army of these large and relatively comfortable permanent bases. Later, when the guerrillas began to grow their own food, the RAF bombed the jungle clearings or sprayed the area with defoliating chemicals. Even when planted under tree cover, the plots could sometimes be detected by reconnaissance planes with infrared cameras.⁸⁵

Successful bombing raids were also directed against targets which had been pinpointed by hard intelligence obtained through agents or government patrols in the area. On the rare occasions when such pinpointing was possible, RAF bombers were guided from the ground, sometimes by markers in daylight but more often by radar at night. Such missions were spectacularly successful; however, bombing without good intelligence probably did more harm than good, since innocent workers and aboriginal tribesmen were the ones most likely to be injured in these operations.⁸⁶

Psychological Warfare Complements Military Operations

British psychological warfare operations in Malaya were insightful and provocative and brought some particularly effective results. An early example was the creation of resentment against the insurgents' tactic of slashing rubber trees. Propaganda leaflets in Chinese and Tamil told the workers on rubber plantations that the Communists, by destroying rubber trees, were "breaking our fellow-workers' rice-bowls."⁸⁷ This campaign was so successful that the Communists finally ordered their guerrillas to desist from this type of sabotage.

After this campaign, the emphasis of the government's psychological warfare program shifted to fomenting unrest within the Communist camp itself. One of the most imaginative psychological warfare tactics was the voice aircraft, a plane which flew low over the jungle and broadcast messages to individual guerrillas and units. On occasion, General Templer addressed the guerrillas in Chinese via voice aircraft and gave his personal pledge that none who surrendered would be ill-treated.⁸⁸ Voice aircraft broadcasts and propaganda leaflets were both designed to create dissension between lower echelon guerrillas and their leaders. In October 1953, some 20 million surrender leaflets were dropped over guerrilla-held areas. Often prepared by ex-guerrillas who could speak from personal experience, these leaflets urged lower echelon guerrillas to desert, bring in their leaders, and collect liberal rewards, ranging from M\$4,000 (US\$1,333) to M\$50,000 (US\$16,666).

Propaganda was invariably aimed at the weak, the disgruntled, and the weary who, as chances of a Communist victory appeared more and more remote, came out of the jungle in growing numbers. Hard-core leaders were usually impervious to this type of propaganda, and the government was the first to admit that psychological warfare alone would never have proved decisive. In fact, psychological warfare was only successful in tipping the scales when the guerrillas were already under intense pressure from food-denial operations and from military patrols operating with good intelligence.⁸⁹

Treatment of Ex-guerrillas

With the exception of a very few hard-core Communists—whom the government either executed, banished, or imprisoned—guerrillas who surrendered (known as SEPs for Surrendered

Enemy Personnel or who were captured (ELPs) were rehabilitated in special schools, such as those at Taiping and Ipoh in Perak. The majority of these ex-guerrillas had become involved in the Communist movement through force of circumstance rather than through any deep political conviction. The ex-guerrillas were accorded the respected status of hok-uen (students), and emphasis was placed on vocational training, bookkeeping, and arithmetic. Illiterate students were given basic instruction in the Chinese, Malay, and English languages. Detainees were released after a period of two to six months and were assisted by the government and Chinese civic organizations in finding employment.⁹⁰

Many of the SEPs joined the government's Special Operational Volunteer Force (SOVF), where they received the pay of a lower grade policeman and participated in patrols against their former comrades in the jungle. The SEPs proved invaluable to the government, both as sources of intelligence and as agents of psychological warfare. After some 18 months' service in the Volunteer Force, SEPs were released unconditionally to return to civilian life. Very few of those released returned to the guerrilla movement.⁹¹

Resettlement Isolates Guerrillas

One of the most ambitious undertakings in the Malayan emergency was the government's resettlement program, begun in 1950 under General Briggs and completed during the Templer administration. The resettlement of the Chinese squatter population in areas that could be made secure from guerrilla incursions was a basic feature of the original Briggs Plan. The program took several years to realize its objectives, since it required the construction of some 550 new villages, enlargement and fortification of others, and the resettlement of a half million people on short notice. So far as possible the squatters, 85 percent of whom were Chinese, were persuaded rather than compelled to move. They received some compensation for losses incurred in moving, and the government assisted them in building their new homes and paid them a subsistence allowance for the first few months. In the new villages they were protected from contact with the guerrillas by such defensive features as the barbed wire fences, flood-lights, and cleared spaces which surrounded the village, and by the police guards, who allowed no one to leave at night. Villages were expected to contribute the manpower for a part-time Home Guard, which supplemented the police force.⁹²

Although resettlement was primarily a military operation, it had a variety of far-reaching implications for the political and social development of Malaya and involved some of what has more recently come to be described as civic action. For example, the government tried to provide each family with a livelihood by permitting it to buy or lease a small farm. Other benefits of resettlement included village schools, community centers, piped water, and electric lights. Lectures were given on civics and on the benefits that the Federation government brought to the Malayan Chinese. Elections were held in which villagers who had never before

had experience in local government selected their own councils to manage village affairs. By 1953 there were some 150 villages with their own village councils.⁸³

Opinions vary widely as to the civic action aspects of resettlement.⁸⁴ One measure of the program's success, however, may be Malay protestations that more was being done for the Chinese squatters than for the loyal Malay villagers who had supported the government all along. Of the 550 new villages, about 50 were regarded as very successful, 400 as moderately successful, and 100 as disappointing because they were infiltrated by Communists and continued to aid the guerrillas.⁸⁵

In addition to the squatters, government forces also regrouped estate and mine laborers behind barbed wire defenses to prevent their intimidation by guerrillas. Even then, many workers may have been forced to obey Min Yuen orders to pass food through the wire and to donate one day's pay per month to the MCP.⁸⁶

Political Developments During the Emergency

The British enjoyed a definite psychological and political advantage in Malaya because of their avowed intention to grant Malaya self-government, followed later by full independence, as soon as order could be restored and a common Malayan citizenship and government established. This most potent ideological weapon effectively undercut the MCP's contention that the way to Chinese political participation in the government of an independent Malaya lay through Communist revolution. It enabled the government to gain the support of the Chinese community, which moved increasingly away from support of the insurgents.

After 1952, the British moved speedily to incorporate the Malayan Chinese into the body politic. A new citizenship law enacted that year extended Malayan citizenship automatically to over half the Chinese population in Malaya. Although this did not fully satisfy Malayan Chinese demands, it went well beyond the 1948 law and was perhaps the best compromise the British could obtain from the Malays. Also in 1952 the Malay Civil Service was changed to the Malayan Civil Service, and Chinese were admitted for the first time, although restricted to a ratio of one Chinese to every four Malay civil servants.⁸⁷ The plan to involve the Malayan Chinese directly in the war effort through two years' compulsory military service was, however, largely a failure owing to the widespread evasion of conscription by young Chinese.

General Templer constantly sought to widen the participation of both Chinese and Malays in all phases of the country's political life. After 1952 village councils were elected to provide for local governments to precede the formation of a national government, and in 1955 the first national elections were held. The newly elected government won assurances from London of complete independence by 1957. During this terminal period of British rule (1955-57), Malaya's first national government was a political coalition stemming from an interracial election alliance of the United Malay Nationalist Organization (UMNO) and the Malayan Chinese Association

(MCA). Malaya's most prominent political leaders included both Malays and Chinese. Dato (Sir) Onn bin Jaafar, the founder of UMNO, which he led until 1951, Tunjku (Prince) Abdul Rahman, who became president of UMNO in 1951 and Prime Minister of the Independent Federation of Malaya in 1957; and Sir Tan Cheng-look, the wealthy Chinese founder and leader of the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA).

The Malayan Chinese Association had been organized as early as February 1949, by prominent members of the Chinese business community loyal to the government. In the MCA, anti-Communist Chinese leaders sought to create an organization which could compete with the Communists for the allegiance of the poor Chinese workers and squatters by serving as a kind of political lobby for Chinese communal interests in the Federation. After 1950 the MCA began assisting in the resettlement of squatters and the rehabilitation of SEP's. It collected funds from wealthy Chinese for the relief of indigent Chinese, found jobs for rehabilitated guerrillas, and functioned as the chief legal political party of the Malayan Chinese.⁹⁸

Negotiations With Ch'en P'ing in 1955

General Templer's departure from Malaya in 1954 marked the end of the critical period of the emergency. In 1955 the Communists indicated for the first time an interest in negotiations with the newly elected Malayan government. The government, for its part, was anxious to end the emergency and, on September 9, 1955, offered amnesty to the guerrillas. Declaring that it would not negotiate with the MCP, the government promised that guerrillas who surrendered as individuals would not be prosecuted for acts committed under Communist direction.

When the surrender rate actually declined in the months that followed this offer, the government responded by announcing the resumption of full-scale military operations. Security forces ceased to follow the "shout before shoot" procedure and, according to a news leak, December 25 was set as the amnesty deadline. Ch'en P'ing then agreed to a cease-fire in the Thai border area. Despite the government's official position that it would not enter into negotiations with the MCP, for two days late in December the Federation's Chief Minister, Tunjku Abdul Rahman, Singapore's Chief Minister, David Marshall, and the MCA's Sir Tan Cheng-look met with the Secretary General of the MCP and his guerrilla staff.

Ch'en P'ing agreed to end the fighting, but only on the condition that the MCP be allowed to operate as a legal political party—terms which were totally unacceptable to the Federation and Singapore governments. The meeting broke up with both sides calling for "a fight to the finish," and in February 1956 the amnesty offer was withdrawn.⁹⁹

By now the guerrillas were believed to number only about 2,500, but so long as they remained in the jungles these hard-core Communist insurgents posed a threat to the emergent nation which could not be ignored. Prime Minister Abdul Rahman asked for continued military assistance by British Commonwealth forces after the Federation became independent on August

31, 1957, and Great Britain promised to keep at least 12,000 troops in the country. Early in 1957, there were still some 42,000 British and Gurkha soldiers and airmen, in addition to Australian and New Zealand troops and some 9 battalions of Malayan troops. Military operations and police measures continued, although on a greatly reduced scale, for almost three years after Malaya became an independent state within the British Commonwealth.¹⁰⁰

Casualty Figures and Cost of the Emergency

During the 12 years of the Malayan emergency, casualties among counterinsurgent military personnel were remarkably low, with only some 500 regulars killed. However, 1,900 members of the police and Home Guard were killed. Also, almost 2,500 civilians lost their lives; of these, 1,700 were Chinese, while over 300 were Malays; some 200 were Indians; another 100 were Sakai and others; and over 100 Europeans, for the most part planters or managers of estates and mines in the interior.¹⁰¹ One expert, observing that "for every soldier, policeman or Home Guardsman killed, six guerrillas were killed or captured," concluded that this was due to the fact that the counterinsurgents were better trained fighters and that the guerrillas concentrated their main offensive against the civilian population.¹⁰²

The financial cost of the emergency to the British and Federation governments has been estimated at \$1.4 million a week. From \$83,000 a day in 1948 the cost steadily mounted until it was over \$234,000 a day in 1953. These figures may be low; one source has put the total cost at \$1,200 million.¹⁰³

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

The emergency was officially ended in June 1960. There were occasional clashes after this time, however, between government forces and Communist guerrillas still operating in remote areas. The leaders of the MCP did not come to terms with the Malayan government, which in turn banned all political activity by Communists and continued to hunt down the few hundred guerrillas remaining in the jungle.

The military outcome in Malaya was clearly one of defeat for the Communist insurgents. Their failure was due to such factors as: (1) their inability to attract and keep the loyalty of the population—the MCP was not even successful among the Chinese, most of whom came around to supporting the government; (2) their inept military and political leadership; (3) the lack of effective outside aid and the breakdown of local logistics; and (4) the British counterinsurgency campaign in Malaya.

Some of the outstanding features in this counterinsurgent effort were close coordination of civil and military operations, good communications, rapid deployment of troops, and the creation of an effective intelligence organization. Food-control measures and especially the

resettlement program were of decisive importance. British colonial policies in Malaya kept the loyalty of the population, most of whom identified with the government against the guerrillas. That it took 12 years and close to a billion dollars to break down the Communist village organization and to find and kill or capture a few thousand guerrillas operating under the handicaps faced by the Malayan Communists points up the fact that counterinsurgency, even under favorable conditions, is a long and costly affair.

The Malayan economy, which in 1948 was well along in its recovery from World War II, weathered the storm of the 12-year emergency with only short-term losses. The rubber industry as a whole was able to maintain production, despite the added expense of plantation defense, which was borne largely by private industry. The Korean War of 1950-53 created boom conditions on the world rubber market which brought about both price inflation and higher wages for Malayan workers in the rubber industry. The Federation government was thus able to draw on its dollar reserves built up through rubber and tin sales in the wartime period to meet the costs of emergency.¹⁰⁴ As for long-range consequences, the emergency led to the resettlement of half a million marginal agriculturalists in new villages, which in most cases afforded better living conditions and greater economic security than these people had known before. Under pressure of the emergency the Malays acceded to Chinese demands for land tenure and wider participation in the civil services. At the same time, more Malays were absorbed into the economic life of Malaya, placing the Malay community on a more equal economic footing with the urban Chinese.¹⁰⁵

A Communist Defeat

The MCP sustained a political as well as military defeat, for the insurgents were unsuccessful in either establishing a Communist state or influencing political events after 1957. Whether the emergency actually impeded the course of Malayan independence remains a moot question, but certainly Malaya's achieving independence in 1957 was not the result of the Communist rebellion. Malaya's political future is presently bound together with the success of Malaysia, a regional federation, organized in September 1963, comprising Malaya, Singapore,* Sarawak, and Sabah (North Borneo).

At present, communism appears to have been soundly defeated in Malaya. Nevertheless, like a malarial infection in the human body, some residue doubtless remains in the form of underground and isolated secret cadres of the MCP. These cadres now represent only a latent and potential threat to the Malaysian Government, but in the event of a Communist takeover in neighboring Thailand or Indonesia, or a severe economic and political crisis in Malaya itself, these hard-core Communists might emerge again as leaders of a new and possibly more dangerous insurgency.

*Singapore withdrew from the Federation in August 1965.

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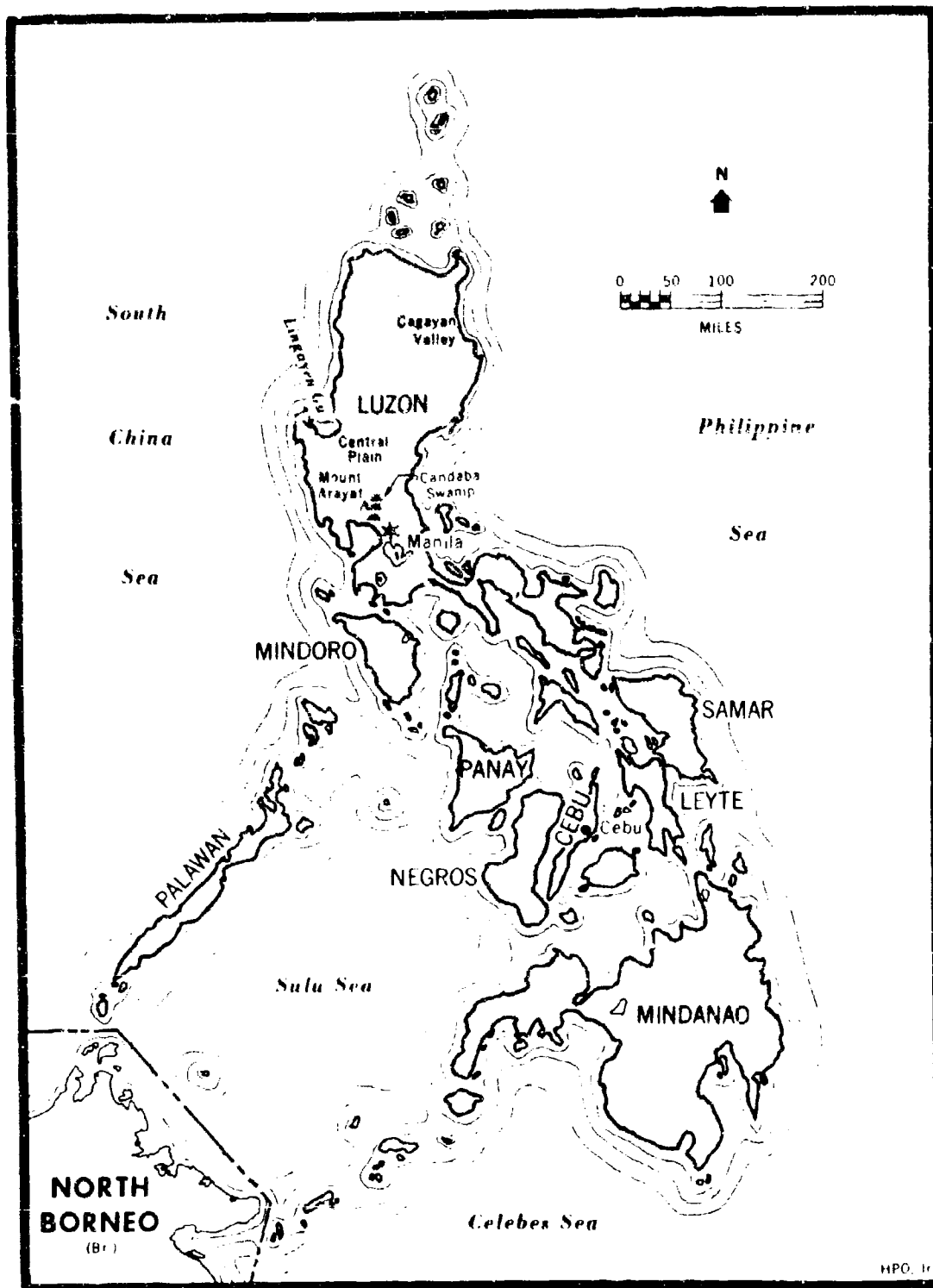
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Chapter Sixteen

**THE PHILIPPINES
1946-1954**

by Robert Ross Smith



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After five years of governmental failures against the Communist Hukbalahap insurgency, the dynamic Filipino leader Ramon Magsaysay transformed defeat into a resounding counterinsurgent victory.

BACKGROUND¹

Communist-directed insurgency in the Philippine Islands—the Hukbalahap movement—did not suddenly spring full-blown into being after World War II. Rather, the insurgency had been at least partially planned and prepared during the war, and it evolved in large measure from economic, political, and social conditions that had prevailed in the Philippines for hundreds of years.* The insurgency was, in fact, a nearly successful revolution; but it might never have taken place had successive governments in the Philippines adopted enlightened, responsive steps to eliminate the basic ills that invited Communist exploitation.

With a total area of 115,760 square miles, the Philippines comprise nearly 7,100 islands, fewer than 500 of which are more than a square mile in size. Ninety percent of the land area is concentrated in 11 islands, notably Luzon in the north, with 40,420 square miles, and Mindanao in the south, with 36,540 square miles. The archipelago, lying 500 miles off the Asiatic mainland, stretches about 1,150 miles north to south and almost 700 miles west to east, and has more than 14,000 miles of coastline.

In 1946, when the Hukbalahap insurgency began in earnest, the population of the Philippines was about 18.5 million, exclusive of U.S. military forces and a temporary group of American civilian employees. Fewer than a fifth of the people lived in cities, and half of these were in Manila and its suburbs. Almost half of the total population lived on Luzon, the largest island and center of Hukbalahap activity.

Most of the people of the Philippines—some 87 percent—were of Indonesian-Malayan stock. In 1946, some 3 percent were Caucasians permanently residing in the Islands, less than

¹See chapters 4 and 8 for Philippine insurgency-counterinsurgency situations in 1899-1902 and 1942-1945, respectively.

1 percent were Chinese, a small and undetermined number were Aetas or Negritos living in isolation in the mountains of Luzon and Mindoro, and the remainder were of mixed blood. Tagalog, the language of the Manila region, was nominally the national language, but few of the people actually spoke it. Nearly 70 distinct dialects derived from a common Austronesian-type language were spoken in the Islands, with eight dialects in use by about 90 percent of the population. Spanish was understood and spoken by something less than 5 percent. In 1946, about 30 percent of the population could speak some English in addition to their native dialect, and even in the most remote hamlets of Luzon it was usually possible to find someone who spoke English.

Roots of Insurgency

The geographic and ethnic fragmentation of the Philippines was not, however, the moving factor in the insurgency of 1946-54. Rather, the insurgency grew primarily from social unrest rooted in economic disparities and from Communist exploitation of popular dissidence.

For generations before World War II, agrarian unrest had been a serious problem in central Luzon and, in varying degrees, in the agriculturally rich Cagayan Valley of northern Luzon and in kindred areas on other islands such as Panay, Negros, and Mindanao. But economic exploitation was not limited to agriculture alone. Laborers in the sugar, mining, lumbering, and quarrying industries, for example, faced economic problems as grave as those of the peasantry. And, as industrialization and commerce grew after the turn of the 20th century, workers in the larger population centers—Manila and Cebu City, for example—also often found themselves in an economic trap from which escape appeared impossible.

Other factors promoting the growth of communism and other dissident movements in the Philippines were the political philosophies and policies espoused by the generally ultraconservative ruling class, both before and after World War II. Deeply entrenched, if not always overt forms of social discrimination also generated resentment among some segments of the population. Still another base upon which the Hukbalahap movement could build was the long Filipino tradition of insurgency—the use of guerrilla warfare, sedition, sabotage, and all affiliated clandestine techniques against any established authority. But whatever the weight of other causative factors, it was principally the problems incident to agrarian unrest—and, concomitantly, governmental failure to solve those problems—that gave rise to the Communist-inspired, Communist-dominated, and Communist-controlled Hukbalahap insurgency in the Philippines.

Land Tenure and Rural Discontent

Agrarian unrest was not a product of U.S. control in the Philippines, nor, in fact, did it stem entirely from the older Spanish regime. When the Spanish reached the Philippines in the 16th century they found already in existence on Luzon a native agrarian slave-serf-tenant

system that invited imposition of the encomienda system which the Spanish had already established in Central and South America. Two types of encomiendas came into being—lay and religious, but in either case the peasants worked as tenants on lands belonging to others. As time passed, many of the original lay encomiendas passed into mestizo (mixed blood) or native Filipino hands, but with no improvement in the lot of the peasantry. The normal method of agriculture during the Spanish period was essentially a sharecropping system that seldom allowed the tenant more than 30 percent of the crops he raised and, more often than not, left him with as little as 10 percent.

During the period of U.S. control after 1898, most of the vast church estates were ostensibly broken up and redistributed. However, one way or another, much of the land ultimately found its way back into the hands of large landowners, either from the old landed aristocracy or from elements that found new economic opportunity under the American regime. Moreover, the American authority did nothing to disturb the vast lay estates that had existed during the Spanish occupation. The fact is that, during the U.S. administration before World War II, both the amount and percentage of tenancy rose throughout the Philippines. Just before the war, fewer than 50 percent of all farmers owned the land they worked, 35 percent being tenants, and 15 percent being hired agricultural workers or a combination of hired worker and tenant. In some areas the tenancy figures ran much higher. In Pampanga Province on central Luzon, a hotbed of agrarian unrest, over 70 percent of the farmers were tenants and sharecroppers; in Luzon's Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Cavite, Tarlac, Bataan, and Laguna Provinces, the tenancy rate was well over 50 percent.

Despite the bleak picture in agriculture, the Philippines, by the outbreak of World War II, boasted the highest average standard of living and the highest average per capita income of any country in the Orient. But this average was misleading, since the low income of the poorer classes, representing over 90 percent of the population, was offset by the fabulously high income of the 5 percent of the people who ran the country both politically and economically. The small and growing middle class represented only about 5 percent of the population. The average farmer in the Philippines had an income of no more than \$85 per year.

In brief, American attempts at agrarian reform before World War II barely scratched the surface of the basic problem. Meanwhile, the agricultural peasantry expected much more, and their expectations grew with the spread of democratic ideals, broader educational opportunities, public works programs, and new political and economic opportunities that evolved during the U.S. administration. Minor troubles were frequent during the period of American hegemony, and several serious revolts or uprisings occurred, three during the 1920's and two in the 1930's. Some of these upheavals had fanatic religious overtones, others stemmed from demagoguery of the worst sort, but all found their strongest appeal among the agricultural peasantry. One of the most powerful dissident movements of the 1930's was the Sakdal, a rightwing,

ultranationalistic group whose remnants, after an abortive uprising in 1935, largely gravitated to the pro-Japanese Ganap movement. Other remnants of the group, making the full swing of fanatics, ultimately found a home in the Communist movement.

Communist Activity Before World War II

Despite inviting conditions, especially in the degree of agrarian unrest, communism had a slow start in the Philippines, probably because of the influence of the Roman Catholic Church, to which communion the vast majority of Filipinos belonged. Nevertheless, by 1925 there was significant Communist leadership in the Philippines. At first such leaders worked with existing liberal, reforming or leftwing organizations. Following normal Communist techniques, the leaders began securing control of such organizations as the National Peasant Union (Kapisang Pambansa ng mga Magbubukid sa Filipinas, or KPMP), and, in the larger cities, the labor unions. In 1927, the Communists managed to affiliate the Philippine Labor Congress with international Communist organizations, and about the same time they organized the Workers' Party to give political weight to the Communist movement. Splitting away from the Labor Congress, the Communists formally organized the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) in 1930. In 1932 Philippine courts outlawed the CPP, but the Communists continued to work underground through the KPMP and various labor groups.

The years 1929-30 also saw the organization of a militant, leftwing Socialist Party in the Philippines with a companion organization known as the Workers and Peasants Union (Agumangding Maldeng Talapegobra, or AMT). The Socialist Party had little strength, however, until after the Communist Party was outlawed in 1932. After that, the Communists gradually gained control of the Socialists, a trend that accelerated in 1938-39, when a number of imprisoned Communist leaders were freed and Communist-front organizations again began to operate openly. In 1938 the Socialist and Communist Parties formally merged, with the Communists firmly in control. Coordinated action by the merged group and its AMT and KPMP forces resulted in the rapid spread of its influence throughout central Luzon, into parts of northern and southern Luzon, in Bataan and Zambales Provinces, and on Cebu, Negros, and Panay Islands. In 1940 the Socialist vice president of the merged party narrowly missed election as governor of Pampanga Province in central Luzon, while the party won eight mayoralty races in the same province, in four Tarlac Province municipalities, and in one Nueva Ecija Province municipality. In part, the merged party operated through a so-called Popular Front Party, which split in 1940 into rightwing and leftwing groups.

The Communists Assume a Major Role During World War II

The Communist-Socialist leadership, clearly emerging as a force to be reckoned with on the eve of World War II, provided the bulk of the leadership for the Hukbalahap movement

organized against the Japanese occupation during the war. The war, in fact, gave the Communists their big chance to graduate from political action into the field of actual insurgency, following methods that were giving the Communists success elsewhere in the world.

In general, the Communists in the Philippines followed the Moscow political line before, during, and after World War II—albeit not slavishly. They often showed signs of a strong nationalism that would have been anathema to a Stalinist; and many Communist leaders in the Philippines (few of whom had been trained in Moscow) looked more toward the Chinese Communists than toward the Russians for guidance, help, and ideological kinship. This pro-Chinese orientation of the Filipino Communists helped to reinforce their anti-Japanese feeling, shared by the vast majority of Filipinos. Certainly, the Communists could not have lasted long in the period just before the outbreak of war, had they taken any other line. After the German attack on Russia in June 1941, of course, both the Russian and Chinese Communists were aligned against the Axis Powers and the Communist line coincided with popular Filipino reactions.

As war threatened the Philippines, the Communist leadership saw an opportunity to increase its prestige and power. In October 1941, both the AMT and KPMP exhorted labor groups, peasant organizations, and various anti-Japanese groups to unite against Japanese aggression; and some Communist leaders began agitating for the formation of anti-Japanese guerrilla units. On December 10, 1941, just two days after the outbreak of the war in the Philippines, the Communists issued an anti-Japanese manifesto pledging support of the Allied war effort, again urging preparation for guerrilla warfare and calling for a United Front.

These efforts foreshadowed the coming line of Communist maneuvering in the Philippines and reflected usual Communist techniques. Through the United Front appeal, the Communists bid fair to attract to their cause many people who would not ordinarily have associated with them. At the same time, they were able to present to the public an operating organization, some definite plans, capable leadership, experience in subversive techniques, and the nucleus of a mass movement of peasants and workers upon which to build an anti-Japanese movement. Thus the Communists and their affiliates were virtually the first groups in the Philippines to plan for guerrilla warfare during the war.

Organization of the Hukbalahap

In February-March 1942, the United Front movement was formed on Luzon under Communist leadership, but with some non-Communist groups and personnel affiliated. Initially, the organization was headed by a 12-man Provisional National Committee of the United Front, which was subdivided into political, economic, and military committees. Conditions being what they were, the Military Committee soon became predominant, and in March 1942 it formally organized an anti-Japanese guerrilla force, the People's Army to Fight the Japanese. In Tagalog,

the dialect of much of central Luzon, this read "Hukbong ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon," the initial syllables of which provided the short title Hukbalahap (or Huks). The Military Committee came to be known as GHQ-Hukbalahap, and its chairman, Luis Taruc, became the Hukbalahap commander. By 1944, the Provisional National Committee of the United Front ceased to exist even as a fiction and the last non-Communist elements had disappeared from the Communist-dominated Hukbalahap forces.

During 1942 and the first quarter of 1943, the Hukbalahap had emphasized military buildup, organization, and operations. When Japanese punitive expeditions in March 1943 dealt severe blows to the organization, the Hukbalahap decided to de-emphasize overt military operations and to improve and expand their underground organization. To increase their mass support base, they rejuvenated a Barrio United Defense Corps, which had been started in January 1942 but then neglected. The corps provided supplies, intelligence, and recruits to the guerrilla forces; formed a propaganda base; and operated local, clandestine, Communist-dominated "governments." At the same time, the Hukbalahap began generally to perfect their organization and to expand their area of influence.

Huk Relations With Other Guerrillas and U.S. Forces

The political and military expansion of the Hukbalahap during the war brought the Huks into increasing conflict with non-Communist, pro-American guerrillas who looked to U.S. Gen. Douglas MacArthur's General Headquarters, Southwest Pacific Area (GHQ SWPA), for support and guidance. Known as USAFFE (United States Army Forces in the Far East) guerrillas, these groups, largely American-led, had no political aims beyond the restoration of the legitimate government. Militarily, they had generally adopted a lie-low policy that emphasized the collection of intelligence for GHQ SWPA and the formation of tactical units against the day when Allied forces would return to Luzon. The conflict between the Hukbalahap and the USAFFE guerrillas was to prevent the guerrilla resistance movement over much of Luzon from realizing its full wartime potential.

During late 1944 and January 1945, the Hukbalahap pushed their work of establishing local governments, even appointing governors for Pampanga and Laguna Provinces, and suddenly increased military operations against the Japanese to the fullest possible extent. Manifestly intending to impress the American high command by their anti-Japanese achievements and by the extent of their strength and influence, Huk leadership apparently meant to present the U.S. and Philippine governments with a fait accompli that would leave the Communists firmly in control of the Central Plains region of Luzon and much of southern Luzon. Huk leaders seemed to have been confident of a warm reception from the Americans; on the contrary, it proved generally cool.

U.S. Forces Oppose the Huks

At the time U.S. forces returned to Luzon in January 1945, GHQ SWPA had collected considerable information about the Hukbalahap organization, strength, leadership, and aims. This information allowed a clear understanding of the transition of the Hukbalahap movement from the militantly anti-Japanese United Front orientation of 1941-42 to the Communist-line activities and political emphasis that characterized the movement by late 1943. GHQ SWPA did not anticipate any overt Hukbalahap action against American invasion forces, but clearly foresaw that the movement could become a difficult problem for legitimate military and civil authorities during the re-occupation of Luzon and the re-establishment of legal government. The movement's ultimate goal, in the opinion of GHQ SWPA, was to establish a Communist regime in the Philippines as soon as U.S. forces, having wrested the Islands from the Japanese, had departed. Accordingly, U.S. troops returning to Luzon were suspicious of the Hukbalahap and were prepared to brook no interference from them.

As a result, American forces disarmed many Huk guerrilla units in the Central Plains-Manila area; American civil affairs units removed the local governments that the Hukbalahap had established; and American military personnel, late in February 1945, arrested and imprisoned many high-ranking members of GHQ Hukbalahap. In mid-March, Luis Taruc and his second in command, Casto Alejandrino, were released from prison, partly in response to popular demand from central Luzon peasantry, but primarily to get the help of the two leaders in disarming and disbanding all remaining Huk units.

When the release failed to produce the desired result, the two leaders were rearrested in April, and concerted anti-Hukbalahap, police-type action got underway in central Luzon. Under American leadership initially, the bulk of the troops employed in this police action were Filipinos. Many were from bona fide USAFFE guerrilla units, others were "eleventh-hour" guerrillas; none had any reason to love the Hukbalahap. The result in some areas was a virtual reign of terror in which the innocent suffered with the guilty. It was not until the tactical situation on Luzon became stabilized in midsummer that sufficient American leadership and units could be employed to restore some order out of the chaos which uninhibited, terroristic police actions had created in many areas of the Central Plains.

What the situation might have been, had returning American and Filipino authorities handled the Hukbalahap differently during the Luzon liberation campaign, is imponderable. By the end of the war, it was too late to start over, for cause upon cause had pyramided to draw adherents to the Hukbalahap and to strengthen the hand of the Communists.

The Collaboration Question and Other Postwar Problems

One of the most agitating of all issues was that of collaboration. This issue came into focus when, in April 1945, General MacArthur announced that Manuel Roxas, who had served the

Japanese puppet government in various capacities, had been "liberated"--while four other Filipino members of the puppet government were imprisoned. Roxas had been a prominent prewar politician and a brigadier general of the Philippine Army during the early days of the war. The apparent acceptance of Roxas muddied the waters of the collaboration question almost beyond hope, and subsequent actions on collaboration by both American and Filipino authorities did nothing to lessen the confusion. For example, 31 available members of the prewar Philippine House of Representatives had held offices in the Japanese puppet government, as had 14 surviving members of the Senate. Without the latter 14, Filipino President Sergio Osmeña could not convene a Senate quorum. Although Osmeña was reluctant to reconvene the Congress, he did so under prodding by MacArthur, thus seating 45 members who were still under a cloud. Roxas, with the support of the so-called collaborationist members of Congress, soon became the real power in the government. To the vast majority of the Filipino people, the whole action seemed an unacceptable return to prewar political maneuverings.

Thousands of former guerrillas were also frustrated and disillusioned by governmental programs of guerrilla unit recognition, back pay, and other benefits. The programs were poorly and often dishonestly administered; they were slowed by red tape, affected by favoritism, and, in the case of back pay, marked by petty graft and corruption. Meanwhile, the general letdown of morale and morals incident to the war had opened the door to corruption at almost all governmental levels. Black marketeering flourished in all commodities, including relief and rehabilitation supplies, and inflation was rampant, with the result that legitimate business was paralyzed and economic recovery precluded.

Anti-Americanism developed, not only because of the foregoing factors, but also as the result of slow progress in acting on relief programs and war damage claims. For example, Osmeña's government estimated war damage at \$1,200 million, based upon postwar price levels, and an American war damage commission, using prewar values, estimated damage at \$800 million; but the U.S. Congress, in April 1946, initially voted only \$520 million. In February 1946, the U.S. Congress had denied to Filipino veterans of USAFFE the benefits of the GI bill of rights, mustering-out pay, and other gratuities available to U.S. veterans. As for relief, by June 1, 1946, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency had allocated only \$3,375,000 to the Philippines, scarcely a tenth of the amount that Yugoslavia had received by the same date. Moreover, many Filipinos felt that the proposed Philippine Trade Act of 1946 would tend to freeze the Philippine economy in its prewar colonial pattern.

The Communists Exploit the Political Turmoil

All these factors fed grist to the Communist propaganda mill, but the Communists were by no means the only dissenters. Communist voices only added to the general discontent, and it appeared obvious that some drastic change was due. The Osmeña administration, torn by

factionalism, unable to halt the tide of corruption, and providing no answer to the problems besetting the country, was becoming thoroughly discredited. Indeed, the government nearly collapsed completely during December 1945 and January 1946, after an open split between Osmeña and Roxas. Roxas bolted Osmeña's dominant Nacionalista Party and organized the Liberal Party, which nominated him for President in the April 1946 elections, with Elpidio Quirino as his running mate.

For some time the Communists were unsure what line they should take toward the elections, but ultimately they decided to join the Democratic Alliance (DA). The DA, organized by moderates and liberals in July 1945, had evolved into a political party attractive to many who had become disgusted with the way things were going. Mildly nationalistic and standing for numerous governmental reforms, the DA never came under Communist domination at a national level, although some of its local groups were undoubtedly Communist influenced. The Roxas-Osmeña split and the formation of the Liberal Party posed a dilemma for the alliance and the Communists, who had planned to enter a DA Party slate in the April 1946 elections. The alliance finally decided to support Osmeña and the Nacionalistas as the lesser of the two evils, on the basis that entry of a third party slate would only guarantee the election of Roxas.

On a national basis, Roxas and the Liberal Party won the April 1946 elections. In central Luzon, however, Osmeña and the DA emerged victorious despite a campaign of terror conducted by Roxas supporters, including the bulk of the armed forces. Central Luzon provinces also elected six DA congressmen, including Huk leader Luis Taruc, who had again been released from jail in September 1945, and one liberal Nacionalista. These seven men posed a major problem to Roxas, for they would have denied him the majority he needed in the House of Representatives in order to amend the Philippine Constitution. Since the Constitution accorded Filipino nationals preference in the exploitation of Philippine resources, it had to be amended before the government could ratify the Philippine Trade Act of 1946, which would for a period accord equal preference to Filipinos and Americans. Roxas solved the problem by having his House supporters refuse to seat the seven. At the same time, he prevailed upon the Senate to refuse to seat three moderate Nacionalista senators, thereby increasing his strength in the Senate. These blatant steps handed the Communists another issue by which to gain more sympathizers.

Inadequacy of Government Forces

But the government was not unaware of the threat and, in fact, during the campaign, Roxas had promised to stamp out the Hukbalahap within 60 days after his election. Actually, the Armed Forces of the Philippines were ill prepared for efficient military action. They had been reduced from a total strength of 132,000 to some 37,000 men, of whom over 24,000 were in the Military Police Command which, operating under the control of the Department of the Interior, had taken over responsibility for law and order from the former American-commanded Military

Police Command in January 1946. The Military Police Command was inadequately equipped, its leadership was poor, and its morale was low. The units were not distributed on an equitable basis but were largely immobilized in defensive garrisons according to the desires of powerful politicians, leading businessmen, and rich landowners. Local provincial and municipal police were in even worse straits, and police jobs were usually marked as political awards. The anti-Hukbalahap action in the spring of 1946 soon became in reality a renewed campaign of terror in central Luzon.

INSURGENCY²

At the time, the Hukbalahap was virtually disbanded as a military force, and the Communist leadership was emphasizing political action and general mobilization of supporters. But the Communists had not forgotten that a day for armed uprising might come, and individual members had for the most part kept their arms. By black-market operations, bribery, barter, purchase, theft, and raids, former Hukbalahap military leaders, during early 1946, had also begun to secure stocks of the most modern American small arms, rifles, machineguns, and other military equipment.

The Communists were served by the government's anti-Hukbalahap hunts during the spring of 1946, since these actions alienated people from the government. Even hastily reorganized Huk squadrons often proved more than a match for government forces; and, by the end of May, the Communists' military rebuilding became an established fact, as Luis Taruc reconstituted GHQ Hukbalahap.

Early Truce Efforts Fail

By early June, President Roxas had to admit the fatality of the government's police actions. He now tried mediation and negotiation, promising reforms in the sharecropping system and a three months' truce during which the Hukbalahap could disband and turn in their arms. The truce, however, never really existed except at the highest levels of Communist and government echelons, probably because neither side had sufficient strength to impose its authority on regional and local subordinates. It thus accomplished nothing beyond giving government forces time to re-equip and reorganize and granting the Hukbalahap an opportunity to improve their military posture.

Even before the truce deadline of August 31, 1946, bitter fighting broke out all over central Luzon and spread into Laguna and Tayabas Provinces of southern Luzon, where the Communists were having new organizational success. The expiration of the truce was the signal for a new outbreak of indiscriminate terrorism on the part of the Philippine Armed Forces, again primarily the Military Police Command, reinforced by local Civil Guards (often privately raised),

local police, and substantial portions of the Philippine Army. But government forces were far too immobilized in static defensive positions even to realize such combat potential as they had. The new campaigns, unparalleled in ferocity, again served mainly to further the Hukbalahap cause by fomenting peasant hatred of all government forces and representatives.

The Hukbalahap guerrillas remained highly mobile and continually harassed government armed forces with small hit-and-run raids and ambushes over wide areas of Luzon. These generally successful tactics improved Huk morale, limited their combat casualties, kept Huk units intact, and attracted recruits to the Communist cause, while they impressed the peasantry with the futility of the government's military operations and helped demoralize and exhaust government forces.

Huks Expand to New Areas and Reorganize

Meanwhile, the Communists gained more success in expanding their mass support base beyond the four central Luzon provinces of Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, and Bulacan, the original area of "Huklandia." For this purpose they employed a new National Peasants Union (Pambansang Katsahan ng Magbubukid, or PKM), formed by merging the remnants of the pre-war KPMP and AMT. In the fall of 1946, the PKM moved rapidly into Bataan and Zambales Provinces, west of the Central Plains, followed by Hukbalahap military organizers. Increased political and military organizational efforts also took place in Pangasinan, Nueva Vizcaya, Isabela, Laguna, Batangas, and Tayabas (Quezon) Provinces of Luzon, and a good administrative base was formed on Panay Island. This organizational activity yielded the Huks both money and recruits.

The Huks were, however, willing to accept a slower pace of military operations in central Luzon in November 1946. Although by no means defeated during the government's 1946 punitive operations, they were willing to use a period of grace in order to repair damage and build up military and political strength. They remained quiet when, in January 1947, President Roxas, in what was probably a propaganda move, announced that the Huk problem had been solved; and it was the government that initiated new operations. In March the Hukbalahap were faced with a three-pronged offensive sweep through the Central Plains, the best and largest yet organized, as government forces converged on the known Huk strongholds of Mount Arayat and the nearby Candaba Swamp.

Overconfident militarily, and at least temporarily obsessed with expansion of the civilian mass support base, the Hukbalahap were caught by surprise. They had also neglected security and now discovered that government agents had infiltrated both their military and political organizations. The latter, especially, resulted in severe blows to the mass support base. But militarily, the Hukbalahap were not badly hurt—their military units were prepared to stand ground at a moment's notice and many of them, at the time of the action, were engaged in

establishing bases in mountainous areas on both sides of the Central Plains. By and large, the upper echelons of Communist military and political organizations escaped the government's dragnet operation, which, from a purely military point of view, was hardly an outstanding success.

From March 1947 through March 1948 the insurgency was less violent in nature, but the Hukbalahap renewed their organizational efforts in ways that were to have an important bearing on the future. They strove to expand their political and military forces, facing some difficulties as the government's economic program improved conditions in the Philippines. Both political and military training schools were established, regional commands for military operations were set up, and preparations for a protracted political and military conflict were continued. The direction of these efforts was made obvious by the renaming of the Hukbalahap as the Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Balayan (Peoples' Liberation Army, HMB). They nonetheless continued to be known as Huks.

Political Confusion Plays Into the Communists' Hands

Circumstances aided the Huks when, in April 1948, President Roxas died and Vice President Elpidio Quirino took over. Initially, Quirino attempted to solve the Hukbalahap problem by conciliation, truce, and amnesty, even allowing Luis Taruc to take his seat in Congress. But once again, a truce and amnesty period had little real effect. Although bad faith existed on both sides during the truce and government forces never entirely halted military operations, it soon became obvious that the Huks were interested in securing peace only on their own terms. They used the truce for organizing and propagandizing; and by mid-August 1948, when it had become clear that nothing more was to be accomplished, Luis Taruc left Manila for a hideout in the Central Plains. When, the next day, the government launched a new punitive campaign, the Hukbalahap answered with a statement that the Philippines could no longer hope to secure peace and democracy by constitutional and parliamentary means.

The alternative was obvious—open, armed revolt. Nonetheless, as of August 1948 the Hukbalahap still did not feel that the proper conditions existed for initiating a successful insurgency. First, they felt that their civilian support base needed expansion; second, they had to convince the peasantry and workers that armed revolt was the only solution; and, third, they had to expand and perfect the organization of their military forces. In the "education" of the peasantry and workers for armed revolt, the Hukbalahap received much indirect help from the obvious failures of the Quirino administration. They were further benefited by the government's military weakness.

A climax of sorts came during the elections of 1949, which matched Jose Laurel, puppet president under the Japanese and standard bearer of the Nacionalista Party, against Quirino and the Liberal Party. The election itself, during which the Huks played, to say the least, an

equivocal part, was marked by violence, corruption, and even farce. Quirino won, but this election was the signal for the corrupt and venal virtually to take over the administration of the country. By the end of 1949, the government was being paralyzed by greed, corruption, and lethargy on the part of both civil servants and armed forces personnel. Seeing no way out of this morass, Filipinos almost despaired of democratic government.

The Hukbalahap not only appeared to have a definite and feasible program, but, at the same time, they had built up their political and military organizations to the point that they expected to be able to take over the Philippines by the end of 1951. Throughout late 1949 and much of 1950, the Hukbalahap greatly increased military activity. Raids and ambushes became daily occurrences throughout the Central Plains; northern and southern Luzon felt the impact; some parts of Manila were hardly safe during the day, let alone at night; guerrilla activity spilled over into Panay and Negros Islands. No government official was safe from murder and robbery unless well protected; barns, crops, warehouses, homes, and animals of wealthy landowners were destroyed; the important sugar industry suffered.

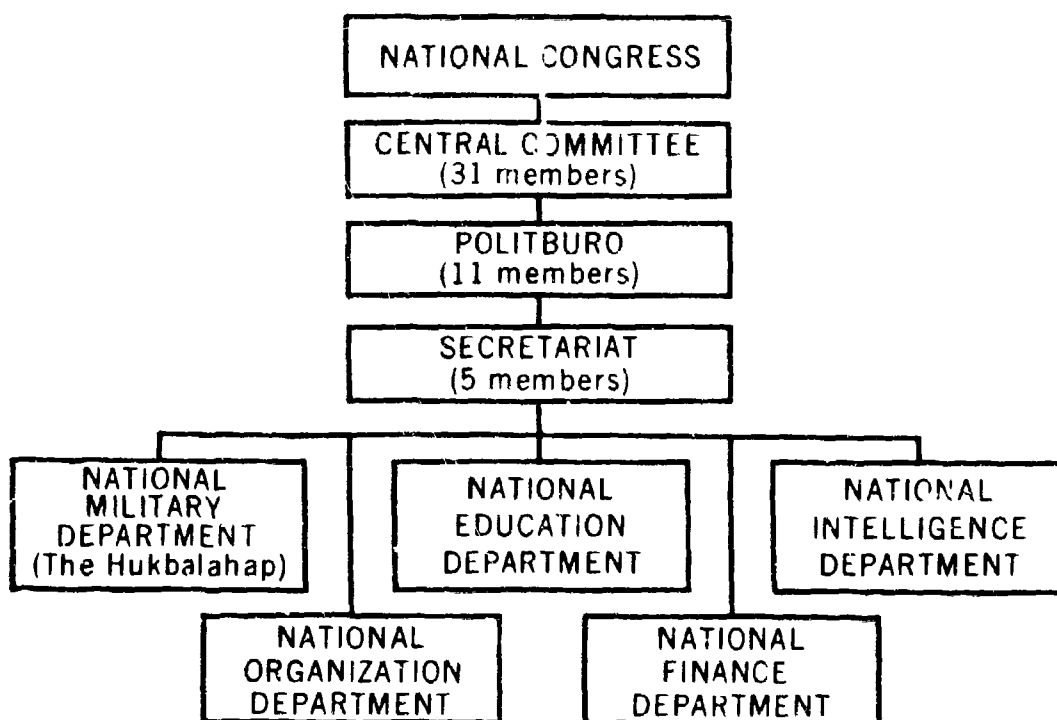
Communist Organization for Insurgency

The organization with which the Communists proposed to take over the country followed normal Communist concepts. At the top was the National Congress of the Philippine Communist Party. Actually, party affairs were generally run by a Central Committee of 31 persons, under which an 11-man Politburo formed an executive committee. A Secretariat of 5 members, consisting of the chairmen of five national departments, operated under the Politburo. The five departments were the National Military Department (the Hukbalahap proper), the National Organization Department (which worked through Communist-dominated workers and peasants groups), the National Education Department, the National Finance Department, and the National Intelligence Department.

The upper echelon of the National Military Department consisted of a GHQ which included the army commander, two deputy commanders, and five general staff sections. Field operations were controlled by ten numbered regional commands (RECO's) and the Manila City command. Regional commands were broken down into field commands (regiments); battalions (seldom used); and the basic guerrilla unit, the company or squadron.

The National Organization, Education, and Finance Departments were set up both in echelon and by area, much as was the National Military Department. The National Intelligence Department, on the other hand, consisted of a small central group that coordinated information received from the other departments. The entire apparatus coordinated the work of the four vertically organized national departments, each of which maintained a close horizontal relationship with the other departments at all echelons of control, and the whole was marked by strict discipline that was essentially military in nature.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE PHILIPPINES



Luis Taruc—The Most Famous Huk Leader

The Hukbalahap movement was normally characterized by a shared, committee-type leadership. Although Luis Taruc was never the sole leader of the Hukbalahap, he did become the best known Huk, their military leader, and toward the end of the insurgency the senior leader of the Communist Party in the Philippines. After his surrender in May 1954, no single Huk leader had enough influence to succeed him as head of the insurgent movement.

The son of a poverty-stricken peasant family of Pampanga Province in central Luzon, Taruc had begun his career of political agitation as a Socialist, in the early 1930's. Perhaps disillusioned by the slow progress of the relatively moderate Socialists, he had gravitated toward the radical left; and, under the influence of an American Communist in the Philippines, by 1938 he had become a confirmed Communist. Before World War II, Taruc had not been a top echelon leader among the Communists; but, after the Japanese captured many of the party's highest leaders in January 1942, second-echelon leadership, including Taruc, took over the party reins in central Luzon. Shortly thereafter, Taruc became chairman of the Military Committee of the

Communist-dominated Provisional National Committee of the United Front, and a member of the 12-man presidium of the National Committee.

Taruc's Military Committee ultimately evolved into a national headquarters of the Hukbalahap, and the early Provisional National Committee virtually passed out of existence. In addition, Taruc normally commanded one of the central Luzon military regional commands of the Hukbalahap. During the post-World War II Hukbalahap insurgency, Taruc was a member of the National Congress, the Central Committee, the Politburo, and the Secretariat, and headed the National Military Department. As the Hukbalahap movement began to disintegrate, virtually all affairs became concentrated in the National Military Department.

Taruc, it appears, lacked the dynamic, forceful personality needed to impose a strong, individual leadership over the entire Huk movement; indeed, it seems evident that he preferred to share power rather than to exert a dictatorial overlordship. Taruc's communism appears to have been "tainted" by a Philippine nationalism that would have been anathema to an orthodox Communist; and it may be conjectured that, had the Hukbalahap insurgency been successful and had Taruc emerged as the principal leader, he might well have followed a semi-independent line. Taruc's strong points appear to have been in the fields of organization and guerrilla-type military tactics, while political doctrine and action were normally left to other leadership, with Taruc providing advice and guidance.

Insurgent Strategy and Tactics

The Communists' objectives were, first, to overthrow the Philippine government by military means and, following this, to establish a people's democracy on the Communist model. To overthrow the government, Huk plans called for a two phase military strategy. During the first phase of strategic defensive, Huk forces would retreat or withdraw, then expand, and finally execute a limited offensive. By mid-1950, the Hukbalahap had passed beyond the first step of retreat, were well into the second step of expansion, and were executing a limited offensive over large areas of the Central Plains. They were waiting only until this first phase of military operations was completed to move into the second phase of strategic offensive. Their plans in mid-1950 envisaged a grand buildup of cadres to 56,000 men, with concomitant increases in party membership and organized masses. They were planning massive strikes, a general uprising, and a strategic offensive by over 100,000 Huk troops—to culminate in the takeover of the Philippine government within two years. This grand offensive was never mounted; Huk operations never passed beyond the limited offensive step.

Tactically, the Hukbalahap employed raids and ambushes as their principal military actions. Raids fell into three main categories: organized assaults against Philippine Armed Forces' positions, attacks in populated areas to liquidate village mayors and other government officials; and general nuisance operations to impress or intimidate the civilian population. Generally, the

Huks were successful in achieving surprise, and careful preparation was a hallmark of the raids during 1949-51, the heyday of Hukbalahap power. At this time the Huks operated in the outskirts of Manila and made terroristic incursions into the city. Night operations were frequent; other raids took place on the eve of or during important religious fiestas or national holidays. Usually the Huks avoided daytime operations except during typhoons or heavy rains, when both approach to and withdrawal from an objective would be covered. Other daytime raids were made against weak Philippine Armed Forces detachments that could not be supported in less than six hours, giving the Huks time for a getaway.

For ambushes, the Hukbalahap normally chose mountainous or hilly terrain where vegetation provided ample concealment. Usually, ambushes were set up against small government detachments or supply convoys, but the Huks were not averse to ambushing larger units if the terrain and situation promised a safe and rapid route for withdrawal. The most notable ambush came in April 1949, when the Huks shot up a motor party, killing Mrs. Aurora Quezon, widow of a Filipino president, as well as other members of her family and several high officials. Whether the Huks actually knew whom they were ambushing is unknown, but the killing created widespread popular revulsion and the action was later said to have proved to be a psychological error. Nonetheless, Huk strength continued unabated. In both ambushes and raids, the Huks employed the hit-and-run technique, which avoided major clashes and emphasized mobility. Such a technique kept Hukbalahap forces intact to fight again, pushed government forces off balance, and wore out government units in fruitless pursuits.

Sabotage was not a favorite Hukbalahap tactic. The Huks had no desire to alienate actual or potential supporters by destroying public facilities; they did not wish to destroy communications facilities they could use themselves; and they apparently lacked trained saboteurs and sabotage equipment.

Communications, Intelligence, and Logistics

The Hukbalahap were especially weak on communications. The geography of the Philippines made the setting up of any clandestine communications system complicated. Security problems inhibited the use of telephone and telegraph lines, while lack of equipment prevented setting up a good shortwave radio network. Perforce, they fell back on a standard courier system with relays, which worked well enough where the Huks were strong. However, when government operations became more effective, dependence upon the courier system proved a serious handicap.

During the height of their power, the Huks had excellent intelligence information, but the adequacy of their collection system was probably overestimated by government forces. In fact, the Hukbalahap hardly had to work to obtain good intelligence—government and Armed Forces security was notoriously poor; troop movements often received advance newspaper publicity; and the demoralization of the Armed Forces was such that the Hukbalahap could often buy much information. Of course,

the Hukbalahap had a built-in intelligence advantage in the vast number of members or sympathizers among the peasantry.

The peasants also provided the Huks with sustenance. Normally, food was obtained from voluntary contributions and carried by military units or civilian volunteers to mountain or hill-side training and concentration areas. When the situation demanded, the Hukbalahap commandeered or stole food supplies; and, when Communist influence began to wane, Hukbalahap troops in the field obtained most of their food through such extralegal operations. Fixed logistical bases were not unknown, especially in the hills and mountains on either side of the Central Plains, or in hills above the plains of Panay. However, such bases were seldom large and, by intent, were usually scattered so as to avoid disastrous losses. Often, a Huk squadron took a station outside a Central Plains village where it was assured of food supplies for at least a few days; the unit would then move a few miles and repeat the process.

Military equipment was a conglomeration of prewar and World War II materiel. Uniforms were virtually nonexistent except at the higher command levels and then were mainly the same khakis that the Philippine Army wore. Some arms derived from the guerrilla days of World War II, others were stolen from U.S. Army depots or captured from Philippine forces during raids and ambushes. The whole was limited to small arms, mainly old Enfield and Springfield rifles and carbines, with a few machineguns, and a very few mortars. Ammunition was obtained in the same way as were the small arms, by theft, purchase, and raids. Ammunition was sometimes a major problem for the Hukbalahap, and ammunition shortages helped dictate the military tactics they employed. In summary, the logistical support operation was generally mobile in nature, with small, scattered fixed bases.

Problems of Terrain and Strategic Location

One serious disadvantage the Huks were never able to overcome was the geographic restriction of the area in which they fought. From the outset, the Communists found their strongest support in dissident agricultural areas. The stronghold of actual and potential insurgency was the densely populated Central Plains of Luzon, extending southward roughly 110 miles from Lingayen Gulf to Manila. Next in importance after the Central Plains were the rich agricultural areas of southern Luzon, especially Batangas and Tayabas Provinces, and the relatively undeveloped agricultural areas of the Cagayan Valley of northern Luzon where the insurgents also gained a significant foothold. Off Luzon, the strongest Communist movement developed on the agricultural plains of Panay Island and northwestern Negros Island; on neither of these islands, however, did the insurgency attain the scope evidenced on Luzon. But the Central Plains area, which proved such a fertile field for Communist insurgency, also presented difficulties. The area was generally wide open, lacking forests or dense jungle in which guerrilla bands could easily hide. In addition, it was rather restricted--110 miles long by an average of 40 miles

wide—and could be fairly easily patro. by a large counterinsurgency military force.

Recognizing the shortcomings, the Huks moved bases and headquarters on or near the wooded slopes of Mount Arayat and among the multitudinous waterways of the nearby Candaba Swamp. Since such areas were not large enough to accommodate all the Communist military and political machinery, higher political and military headquarters, including schools, were hidden in the mountainous regions on either side of the Central Plains and the hill areas of southern Luzon. Nonetheless, all Communist organizations could not withdraw to the mountains. Withdrawal would have undermined the confidence of their supporters and, in effect, handed over the support base to the government. As a result, important Huk leaders were usually found moving about the Central Plains, where they could melt into the general populace, but where they were also in greater danger of being detected. The Hukbalahap also had to keep significant strength in the Central Plains because of the movement's complete dependence upon this area for food and other supplies. When government forces were able to block supply routes from the Central Plains to the mountains, the Communists faced increasing problems.

A further disadvantage for the Communists was their lack of access to safe ports from which outside help might have been obtained. There is no indication that the Huks received any significant amount of military supplies from sources outside the Philippines. It appears that for a short period the Communists may have had one or two advisers from Communist China, and some few arms may have been smuggled in, but there is little indication that the Chinese Communists forwarded any significant amount of arms or other military materiel. Communist China did send printed material, mainly propaganda, smuggled in by one means or another. It has also been reported that as much as \$200,000 was sent into the Philippines from China and distributed to the Huks by the Chinese Communist Party of the Philippines. Local Chinese did make donations to the Huks.

Insurgent Strength and Casualties

The total strength of the Hukbalahap and their sympathizers may only be estimated. Indications are that the number of activists—the high command and the people engaged in the work of the five national departments—never reached a total of more than 17,500 on Luzon, even during the peak of Huk power in 1949–51. At its zenith, the armed strength of the Hukbalahap proper was estimated to be in the range of 12,000 to 15,000 men. In addition to the hard-core activists, the Communists could depend upon the more or less open support of perhaps another 100,000 Filipinos on Luzon alone, most of them peasants. Some estimates place the total number of active supporters at 250,000, plus passive sympathizers and those who were coerced into giving aid. Taruc himself claimed a mass support base of 2 million persons.

No reliable figures on Huk casualties are available. Between early 1950 and late 1955, the total Huk loss was around 10,000 armed men; for this figure there is no breakdown as the number killed, wounded, captured, or surrendered. By April 1952, it was estimated that some 35 to 40 percent of all armed Hukbalahap had been killed or captured. By May 1954, Huk strength had dropped from 12,000 to 2,000 armed men in the field—a clear indication of the decline of Huk power and the success of the counterinsurgents.

COUNTERINSURGENCY³

The first phase of counterinsurgency under Presidents Roxas and Quirino—marked by the lack of a comprehensive long-range program and the introduction of a number of inconsistent stopgap measures—had come to an impasse by late 1950.

The Roxas Administration Alternates Between a Hard and Soft Line

Between his election in April 1946 and his death two years later, President Roxas had tried a variety of measures to put down the Huk insurgency. At first, the government had relied on military force and terror, but by June 1946, the President had declared a three months' truce. Recognizing the validity of some Huk complaints and the effectiveness of their political action, the Roxas administration countered in the summer of 1946 with its own political program, promising a 70-30 percent split for sharecroppers, the elimination of usury, government loans to poor farmers, fairer recognition for World War II guerrillas, the subdivision of large estates for resale, and a resettlement program for overcrowded agricultural regions.

But Roxas had neither the public support nor the financial base to implement his program. His promises, unaccompanied by any civic action or psychological operations programs, never convinced the peasants that the reforms would actually occur and, when unfulfilled, drove more men into the ranks of the Huks. Fighting broke out again before the expiration of the truce at the end of August. By November 1946, operations slowed down. For their part, the Hukbalahap were willing to slacken the pace. For his part, President Roxas apparently wanted to test the effects of his reform proposals and other promises. Also, disorganized government forces were nearing exhaustion and needed time to rest, reorganize, and re-equip. Finally, the government may have overestimated the effects of the 1946 military campaigns.

In what seemed an obvious propaganda move, President Roxas announced in January 1947 that the Hukbalahap problem was solved and that peace and order had returned to the Central Plains. In March, the government began major military operations, which caught the Huks by surprise and disrupted their organizational base but did not succeed in eliminating the guerrillas.

During the following year, President Roxas took steps to stabilize the economy, to ameliorate some of the worst agrarian ills, and to improve the general efficiency of government operations.

Perhaps the most significant development in this period was the negotiation of new United States-Philippine aid agreements, which brought more funds into the Philippine economy and established in the Philippines the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG). With the aid and advice of JUSMAG, the Philippine Army began to re-equip and reorganize. Fighting, however, continued in the Central Plains with little result beyond increasing popular resentment against the government. Against the advice of a number of government officials who wanted to come to terms with the Huks, President Roxas outlawed both the Huks and their affiliated National Peasants Union (PKM) in March 1948.

Deterioration of the Counterinsurgency Under the Quirino Administration

Following Roxas' death in April 1948, President Quirino continued the political and economic measures already started. In the early days of his regime, President Quirino offered the Huks amnesty, mediation, and a new truce; and he made promises of land reform and negotiation on many other programs and policies the Hukbalahap advocated. These offers accomplished little. The Huks used the truce for extending their organization; and Luis Taruc, whom the President had allowed to return to Congress, with back pay, went into hiding again in mid-August. The government countered with new military operations in the Central Plains, using the Philippine Constabulary (as the Military Police Command had been redesignated) and the paramilitary Civil Guard units. These operations achieved little, and the Hukbalahap menace remained unchecked.

By the late fall of 1948, President Quirino, lacking the personal popularity of Roxas, was no longer able to exercise effective control over governmental operations. Corruption, which Roxas had begun to bring under control, again flourished; public morals and morale dropped to a new low; and mutual confidence between the government and people faltered. Favoritism in the appointment of Armed Forces' officers again became widespread, and large portions of the Armed Forces were once more immobilized in protecting private property.

The Quirino administration had no answer except to increase terroristic military activity. But military operations were fast losing their effect. Instead of offering succor to peasants fleeing from Hukbalahap terror, the government treated them so poorly that many returned to their farms to embrace the Communist cause. Even in the face of pressures from members of his own Liberal Party and from American civil and military advisers, President Quirino appeared unwilling or unable to institute any reforms.

President Quirino Appoints Ramon Magsaysay as Defense Secretary

In mid-1950, Quirino precipitated a political crisis by forcing the resignation of Ruperto Kangleon, Secretary of National Defense, who had been pushing for changes in the command structure of the Philippine Armed Forces. The Huks, taking advantage of the administration's

indecision, immediately redoubled their efforts. Forced by public pressure to take new action to save the Philippines from collapse, the President on September 1 appointed Ramon Magsaysay to the post of Secretary of National Defense. This was the turning point in the counterinsurgency fight.

Ramon Magsaysay, son of a lower middle-class family of Zambales Province, western Luzon, had been a bus driver before World War II. During the war, he joined a guerrilla movement in western Luzon and rose to the rank of captain. While neither the highest ranking nor most important guerrilla leader in western Luzon, Magsaysay ran an efficient, honest unit that gained the respect and support both of the people of Zambales Province and of the U.S. officers who led the guerrilla movements in Bataan and Zambales. After American forces returned to Luzon, Magsaysay served with distinction as military governor of Zambales Province. During this period, he emerged as a champion of veterans' rights, a protector of the common people, and an honest administrator; as a result, his popularity and prestige grew rapidly. In 1946 and again in 1949, he was elected congressman from Zambales and in the Philippine Congress gained national attention through his fights for veterans' benefits, his reputation for honesty, his activities as chairman of the House Committee on National Defense, and as chief of a mission to Washington that secured additional benefits for Filipino veterans. As defense committee chairman, he had pressed with some success for many reforms of the Philippine Armed Forces that American advisers recommended. Magsaysay came to his new post promised a virtually free hand by Quirino, who charged him with complete responsibility for the re-establishment of law and order.

Reorganization and Reform of the Armed Forces

From the beginning, Magsaysay was convinced that a major problem was to restore confidence in the government, and that the first necessary step in this process was to rebuild confidence in the Armed Forces. During the first years of counterinsurgency activity, military responsibility for anti-Huk activity had been vested mainly in the Philippine Constabulary with army units assigned to it for action. The Constabulary was a part of the Armed Forces, but it possessed police powers. At the end of World War II many undesirable elements had been recruited into it, and it was ill equipped, undermanned, poorly trained, badly organized, and often miserably led. Pay was often late, and the Constabulary, because of a logistical breakdown, was ordered to live off the country. As a result, commandeering of supplies became a way of life. In addition, the Constabulary had little realization of the need to create a good relationship between itself and the populace in order to fight the type of warfare the Huks were waging. In fact, its actions had done much to destroy public confidence.

When Magsaysay took office, the Philippine Army was already well along the road to basic reorganization and had been given principal responsibility for counterinsurgency from the

Constabulary. Army strength in 1950 was about 17,000 men and the Constabulary's about 12,000. Magsaysay reduced the Constabulary still further to a total of 7,000 men and accepted transfers of all over that number into the Army. Eventually there were 4,000 men left in the Constabulary as against 26,000 in the rest of the Armed Forces.

In almost his first move, Magsaysay turned to the task of cleaning out the Armed Forces from top to bottom, suppressing terroristic tactics, halting graft, and weeding out the corrupt. Incompetent officers were retired or transferred, cliques were broken by transfers, and both the head of the Constabulary and the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces were forced out of office and replaced with men of Magsaysay's own choosing. Summary dishonorable discharges were given undesirable enlisted men, and a number of officers were court martialed for past crimes, with great attendant publicity. Taking to the field himself in a series of surprise visits, Magsaysay instituted a system of spot promotions for officers and men who demonstrated efficiency and fighting ability. Battalion commanders were selected from suitable junior officers between 25 and 32 years old. The ration allowance was increased, and commandeering ended. Within a few months, there was a new, fresh spirit and morale in the Armed Forces.

Winning Support of the Peasants

As he worked to improve the army internally, Magsaysay made strenuous efforts to improve its relations with the peasantry. He heard complaints about the Armed Forces; and he made available, free of charge, the talents of his Judge Advocate General's Department to help the peasantry pursue court cases. Finally, he appointed civil affairs officers to army units, employing these men to interpret the Armed Forces to the people, gain the people's good will, and help solve the peasants' problems.

Magsaysay next set about protecting the peasantry against Hukbalahap terrorism, ordering a battalion combat team to set up headquarters in each of the seven Huk-infested provinces. Realizing that this would mean the temporary defensive immobilization of a large part of his strength and feeling that such immobilization was the antithesis of proper counterinsurgency procedure, he nonetheless accepted the temporary penalty in order to gain public confidence. He also knew he did not have the prestige to remove at once all the garrisons that had been detailed to the protection of private property. In the meantime, he continued offensive actions with available forces, increasing such operations as areas became stabilized. The entire program quickly began to pay dividends, and the hostile attitude of the general populace toward the Armed Forces soon began to yield.

Improvements in Intelligence Collection and Treatment of Prisoners

Another major problem facing Magsaysay was the government's lack of useful intelligence information. There was no coordinated program for the interrogation of captured Huks, and

interrogation methods were generally crude and unsophisticated, to say the least. As often as not, prisoners were simply held incommunicado, beatings were used to extract information, interrogations elicited only local military intelligence, and little attention was paid to the dissemination of information obtained.

Aware of the opportunities being forfeited by the use of such measures, Magsaysay took steps to reform the system. He demanded that prisoners be treated kindly whenever possible and took disciplinary action against Armed Forces units that unnecessarily manhandled prisoners. Schools were started to train officers in intelligence work. Improvements were made in the dissemination of military intelligence gained from prisoner interrogation, and the civil affairs officers attached to army units stepped into the interrogation process to get information useful for the Armed Forces' psychological warfare program against the Huks. Intelligence information from local people, informant nets, interrogations, and patrols was collected and collated at battalion level. Card index files showed order of battle strength, and intelligence situation maps indicated Huk locations.

The improvement in the treatment of prisoners had, in itself, a definite psychological effect. When word spread that torture, starvation, and general abuse were no longer the lot of the prisoner, surrenders increased, especially among peasants in the insurgent ranks who were lukewarm to the Huk cause.

Another intelligence collection technique Magsaysay instituted with good results was a system of rewards. He started by offering small rewards for the surrender of arms and expanded this system by giving larger rewards for intelligence information of all types. High-ranking Communists were given price tags—for example, one Jose Lava, was worth \$50,000. The rewards, paid promptly with no strings attached, were demoralizing to the Huks, who could not compete financially and who well knew the appeal that even small amounts of money had for a poverty-stricken peasant.

Magsaysay's intelligence efforts were aided by a stroke of good fortune early in his career. Shortly after he came to office, Magsaysay went alone to meet an informer, from whom he learned the identity of a Huk courier in Manila. Following up this information, the government was able to seize 12 members of the Communist Politburo, other Communist leaders, and truckloads of Communist documents, including a complete roster of party members, sympathizers, and Huk supporters. The intelligence material seized by the government provided Magsaysay with Huk identifications, organization, and strengths, and a means of tracing security leaks in the government and Armed Forces. To assure that these captured Huks could not return to the hills when out of jail on bail, Magsaysay prevailed upon President Quirino to suspend the writ of habeas corpus. (Later, the President also suspended the writ from time to time in various areas of the Central Plains.) Although Huk field commanders quickly took over the reins, this was a blow from which the Communists never fully recovered.

Small Unit Tactics Emphasized After 1950

In the early years of counterinsurgency, the Armed Forces had depended primarily upon large-scale operations sweeping across vast areas to the exclusion of other types of action. When efficiently conducted, sweep operations sometimes inflicted considerable damage on the Hukbalahap. On the other hand, large unit sweeps normally advertised themselves, giving the Huks ample time to avoid contact and go into hiding. They neither immobilized Huk units nor pressed them into confined areas. In Magsaysay's view, sweep operations could not provide the Armed Forces with the constant and widespread initiative that successful counterinsurgency operations demanded. Moreover, Magsaysay was convinced that large-unit, area-type sweeps seldom paid dividends commensurate with the investment of time, money, and manpower required. Finally, his initial decision to provide the peasantry with positive protection against the Hukbalahap immobilized so many troops that, until army reorganization and expansion were completed, sweeps had to be limited in number and scope.

When Magsaysay took over the Defense Department, the army's basic unit was a rather independent and often self-sufficient battalion combat team (BCT). BCT organization and training was based upon the tactical doctrine of the U.S. Army, from which no drastic changes were needed for counterinsurgency operations. Such changes as were made were those of degree rather than kind and involved modifications to obtain more flexibility and mobility, as well as increased emphasis on scouting and patrolling, night operations, and squad and platoon actions. The BCT normally contained three rifle companies; a heavy weapons company; a light reconnaissance company; various service elements; if necessary, a battery of 105-mm. howitzers; and sufficient transportation to put the whole BCT on wheels. The organization was well suited to the terrain of the Philippines.

Except when the situation seemed particularly propitious for sweeps, Magsaysay depended upon small unit operations to maintain an offensive throughout as wide an area as possible. His own guerrilla experience during World War II probably influenced his preference for small unit action and unorthodox tactics. These were not new in the fight against the Hukbalahap—Magsaysay merely went much further in their use than had his predecessors.

Commando-Type Teams Operate as Huks

Emphasis on highly mobile, small unit actions led to the organization of commando-type units that undertook long-range patrols, conducted hit-and-run raids and ambushes quite like those of the guerrillas, and generally harassed the Huks. A typical team consisted of 15 to 20 men and 1 officer. All teams had one thing in common—heavy fire power for the size of the unit. Thus, a 15-man team would be armed with two automatic rifles and at least four sub-machineguns. The teams normally carried a radio to maintain contact with headquarters, and a camera was often an important item of equipment, for Magsaysay was inclined to insist upon proof of Huk casualties.

At first, most of the small units operated in uniform, but it was a short and easy step for teams to start moving about in civilian clothes, infiltrating among the populace and often passing themselves off as Hukbalahap units. Sometimes, small disguised groups might stay in a Huk-infested area for days, covering their real purpose by devoting only part of their time to army missions. More often, however, the teams tried to maintain contact with uniformed reinforcements by radio or courier. The teams seldom operated in complete detachment, but rather according to schedules that would bring them into contact with other units from time to time. Meticulous planning and coordination had to precede such operations, lest one disguised team start shooting up another or lest uniformed units mistake a disguised force for a Huk unit.

Commando-type, disguised operations were always dangerous, for teams discovered and captured by the Huks, death was usually painful. On the other hand, in this type of clandestine, counterinsurgency warfare, the Philippine Army had advantages no foreign troops could never attain. The army could always man its teams with natives of the region in which the teams were to operate and, since so many enlisted men came from the same general background as did the Huks, it had little difficulty in finding men who could pass as peasants. Whatever the dangers and difficulties, such guerrilla tactics paid dividends. For example, during the first few months that both uniformed and disguised commando teams operated extensively, Philippine Army sources reported that Hukbalahap casualties rose 12 percent, while army casualties fell off 25 percent.

Ex-Huks Help in Anti-Guerrilla Operations

Magsaysay also had some success in enlisting captured Huks in his cause. Perhaps the most outstanding example occurred on Panay Island, second only to central Luzon as a stronghold of Huk influence. In this instance, a Huk leader who had surrendered was sent back to Panay with a force of some 20 other ex-Huks and 3 enlisted men from army intelligence. For three months, this clandestine force operated in a manner that elicited the respect and confidence of the real Hukbalahap leaders on Panay. Its activities culminated in a "by invitation only" barbecue during which many of the most important members of the Huk high command on Panay were killed or captured. This was a blow from which the Hukbalahap organization on Panay never recovered. Deceit and treachery—favorite weapons of the Hukbalahap—were thus tactics that Magsaysay employed when he deemed them warranted.

One aspect of the guerrilla-like tactics the army employed cannot be ignored—the impression these unorthodox operations made upon Huk sympathizers or those intimidated by the Hukbalahap. When the peasantry discovered that the army was meeting and often beating the Hukbalahap with the Huks' own tactics, respect for the army grew, while fear of and respect for the Huks lessened. To find the army beating the Huks at their own game was so incongruous as to be amusing to many Filipinos and laid the Huks open to ridicule. The army's success with

guerrilla tactics was so impressive that, in many areas, the local population increasingly informed upon known or suspected Huks.

In all of the army's small unit actions—whether by regular units, disguised commandos, or former Huks—successful tactics involved constant offensive pressure, relentless pursuit, surprise, extreme mobility, and careful attention to security. By such tactics the Philippine forces were able to force the Hukbalahap military units into mountainous areas where they were cut off from food and other supplies. And in the end, the Hukbalahap military forces were beaten to the ground largely by these small unit operations.

The Role of Air Power

Air power was also brought in to play a supporting role in counterinsurgency operations. Apparently Magsaysay's predecessors had feared to use it very often lest unfavorable political consequences take place. The Philippine Air Force, with a personnel strength of about 4,000 in 1948, was active after 1950, particularly in resupply operations and in reconnaissance missions utilizing both ground spotters and photographic interpretation. Pilots delivered psychological warfare messages, broadcasting upsetting information to Huk units and dropping leaflets. The air force transported ground troops and, possibly most important of all, made it possible for Magsaysay to pay those lightning inspection visits to frontline units. It was also used in bombardment and in close support operations for ground attack.

Resettlement Under the EDCOR Plan

It had been early realized that neither army reform nor efficiently conducted military operations could alone solve the problems of insurgency in the Philippines. To Magsaysay it was obvious that a concomitant need was to attack the basic causes of dissidence, and he felt that the key to success lay in a realistic, efficient, and honest resettlement program. The idea was by no means new, but Magsaysay offered a new approach—an army-controlled and army-backed program, financed mainly by U.S. funds, that not only would relieve overcrowded conditions in such areas as the Central Plains but would also aim at the rehabilitation of dissidents. With some misgivings, President Quirino acceded to Magsaysay's request to give the Defense Department a free hand and to set aside large tracts of land on Mindanao Island for the project.

To get his program underway, Magsaysay organized the Economic Development Corps (EDCOR) in December 1950 under the direct supervision of the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. The EDCOR program did not simply transfer would-be settlers to virgin land and leave them to fend for themselves. Instead, early in 1951, EDCOR engineers began working on Mindanao to conduct surveys, secure titles, clear land, and construct roads, settlers' houses, and other buildings. The first EDCOR teams began working in February 1951, and scarcely three months later the first settlers arrived. In November 1951 a second project got underway on

Mindanao, and in January 1954 a third project was started in Isabela Province of northern Luzon.

The army provided free transportation to the settlement site, a free home plot for gardening, 15 to 25 acres of free land for farming, aid in clearing and starting cultivation, police protection, elementary schools, medical care, water, and in some cases electricity. The program was by no means a giveaway: the settler entered a contract to repay the army for the food, house, tools, and work animals needed for his start. From its inception, the response to the program was overwhelming, and EDCOR always had more applicants than it could handle. Moreover, the program proved a mighty propaganda weapon, for it took the wind out of a major Communist sail—the cry of land for the landless. In desperation, the Communists tried to sabotage the EDCOR projects, but such efforts rebounded to the disadvantage of the Hukbalahap. Even the most gullible peasant could recognize the hollowness of Communist propaganda about land for the landless when Huk leaders opposed the government's program.

Magsaysay Is Elected President in 1953

By the time of the congressional elections in 1951, Magsaysay's programs had made substantial inroads into Communist strength and support. Determined to prevent a repetition of the scandals of the 1949 elections, Magsaysay employed the Armed Forces to guard polls and protect voters. The election brought some surprises. President Quirino had thought that Magsaysay's progress would work to the advantage of his Liberal Party, but instead it suffered a drastic defeat. The people manifestly felt that, except for the Department of Defense, the Quirino administration was still corrupt and impotent. On the other hand, Magsaysay, gaining even new prestige and respect as a result of his efforts to guarantee an honest election, emerged as a tremendously popular national figure.

The elections marked the beginning of a parting of the ways between Quirino and Magsaysay. The President began to suspect Magsaysay's motives and ambitions and to listen more closely to administration groups which had opposed Magsaysay from the beginning. Administration forces attempted to discredit Magsaysay publicly and, failing that, began to impede the work of the Defense Department. In February 1953, with his position becoming increasingly untenable, Magsaysay resigned as Secretary of National Defense and announced his candidacy for President on the Nacionalista ticket in the 1953 elections. When Ambassador Carlos P. Romulo, who had also broken with Quirino, withdrew from the race, Magsaysay also received the support of the Democratic Party. In April 1953, Magsaysay and the Nacionalistas won an overwhelming victory.

Greater Stress on Social Reform

Upon taking over the Presidency, Magsaysay put renewed effort into the counterinsurgency struggle. He pushed military campaigns, psychological operations, resettlement programs, and

civic improvements of all types. He had new land reform acts passed by Congress, and he put teeth into laws already on the books, such as the one calling for tenants to receive a minimum 70 percent share of the crops they raised. He promoted, with American aid, an extensive program to bring pure water to farms of the agricultural provinces; he pushed public education programs; and he started a broad program of road and bridge construction and maintenance. Finally, he pressed to completion a land resettlement program—mainly upon expropriated private lands—in the heart of Pampanga Province, long the stronghold of Hukbalahap power. The payoff came in May 1954 when Huk leader Luis Taruc surrendered.

Magsaysay's popularity now knew no bounds in the Philippines; and the opposition of rich landowners, some important businessmen, and the ultraconservatives and ultranationalists did nothing to dim his reflection. The answer to the opposition came in the congressional elections of 1955, when eight of nine contested Senate seats went to men supported by Magsaysay. By this time, the Huks no longer constituted a military threat of serious proportions in the Philippines.

Effects of Military Operations

Under the Magsaysay regime, the effect of military operations against the Hukbalahap, coupled with the civic action programs, was cumulative. For example, for the 21 months between April 1950 and the end of 1951, Philippine units captured about 4,500 Hukbalahap weapons of all types; while during the 3 months from January to March 1952, over 4,000 Huk weapons were captured or turned in. By that time, the Hukbalahap had lost well over 50 percent of the weapons they had had two years earlier. Casualties were also sapping Huk strength and recruitment no longer filled their ranks. By April 1952, 35 to 40 percent of the armed Huks who had been in the field in early 1950 had been killed, captured, or had surrendered, with the result that the Hukbalahap felt each succeeding casualty more keenly.

The Huk menace had by no means disappeared by April 1952, but so much had been accomplished that the Armed Forces were able to start redeploying strength on the basis of tactical needs—releasing defensive garrisons for field operations, increasing the pace of offensive operations, undertaking constant surveillance of large areas, and sometimes returning to large-scale area sweeps. By the end of 1952, there was a marked decrease in the number of army units needed for military operations, with consequent benefit to other aspects of the counterinsurgency campaign, since more troops could participate in resettlement projects and other civic action programs.

By the time Luis Taruc surrendered to the government in May 1954, the Magsaysay program had reduced the Hukbalahap to little more than a nuisance. By the end of 1955, the 2,000 armed Huks still in the field on Luzon could no longer be considered a military force or even bona fide guerrillas. For the most part, the remnant bands were acting like bandits, seeking

only to sustain themselves. Police action, not military campaigns, sufficed to hold the remaining Hukbalahap in check, although Philippine Armed Forces continued patrolling, concentrating for operations against Huk units of significant size, and maintaining garrisons throughout the country to insure that no revival of Hukbalahap military activity could take place. Perhaps more important, the open Communist sympathizers had dropped from a high somewhere between 100,000 and 250,000 in 1949 and 1950, to fewer than 30,000 by the end of 1955. Large segments of the agricultural population, which previously had offered no opposition to the Hukbalahap, were now militantly anti-Communist and were cooperating with government military and civic action forces.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

Manifestly, the Magsaysay programs, representing a judicious combination of military and civic action, had succeeded in the Philippines. Salient aspects of this success, in summary, include the following.

First and most important, a dynamic, aggressive, and dedicated leadership—motivated by a sincere concern for public welfare and a conviction that success was possible against the Communist threat—was provided in the person of Magsaysay himself. To a certain extent, the government's success against Communist insurgency in the Philippines during the period 1950 to 1955 may be termed a one-man show.

Second, there was the realization that military action alone, no matter how efficiently conducted, could never provide a permanent solution to the basic causes of dissident movements in the Philippines. This realization led to the careful imposition of civic action and resettlement programs. The civic action program, conducted in the beginning almost entirely by the Armed Forces, was dedicated to the goal of restoring the people's confidence in their government and their Armed Forces. The resettlement program not only attacked land tenure and tenancy problems but also provided for the rehabilitation of dissidents. At the same time, however, Magsaysay knew that not one of those programs, or any combination of them, could succeed alone, for military action against militant insurgents was an equally necessary part of counterinsurgency.

Third, Magsaysay realized the need to provide honest and impartial government, dedicated to the proposition that the government was the servant of the people, not the reverse. This was basic to recapturing public confidence.

Fourth, Magsaysay revitalized the Armed Forces into an effective force that, by combining orthodox and unorthodox tactics and emphasizing small unit operations, could destroy the Communist military threat and beat the Hukbalahap at its own game of guerrilla warfare.

The Philippines had faced a very real threat of Communist-led armed revolution, at a period when economic and political chaos was at an all-time high and the government was verging

upon complete impotency, if not collapse. Some may have taken comfort in the thought that the United States, despite its involvement at that time in Korea, could not have stood idly by to watch a Communist takeover in the Philippines. But it is noteworthy that the Philippines saved themselves.

Magsaysay's untimely death in an air crash in 1957 was a real loss to the Philippines, although the reforms and the progress made when he was Secretary of National Defense and President continued. This is not to say that all dissidence-fomenting problems in the Philippines were removed. In early 1964, Filipino news releases indicated that the Communists still had about 2,000 armed personnel and about 10,000 active sympathizers. At this writing in early 1965, there are again unhappy rumblings concerning governmental corruption, disillusionment with the United States, and economic discontent. Thus a return to insurgent conditions is not impossible. But the way to successful counterinsurgency was certainly made clear by Magsaysay, and it is to be hoped that the lessons learned at such cost and difficulty will not soon be forgotten.

NOTES

Author's Note: This study is based entirely upon published secondary sources, all in English. No large body of primary source material on the Hukbalahap insurgency appears to be available in the United States, and the most noticeable gap in all materials involves details of the military aspects of counterinsurgency operations. The documentation employed in this study is general rather than specific in nature, and much of the author's own knowledge of the Philippine counterinsurgency experience derives from study in preparation for writing a manuscript, "The Hukbalahap Insurgency: Economic, Political, and Military Factors," for the Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, in 1963.

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Chapter Seventeen

**SOUTH KOREA
1948-1954**

by B. C. Mossman



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The Republic of Korea was faced, almost at its birth, with a Communist insurgency which supported the invasion from North Korea and lasted even after an armistice had ended conventional military operations; the little-known counterinsurgency struggle of the Republic and the United Nations Command, rather than the headline news of the war, is the subject of this paper.

BACKGROUND

To the people of Korea, the Allied victory over Japan in World War II meant freedom. For 40 years this Florida-shaped peninsula jutting southeastward from the central Asian mainland had been a colony in the Japanese Empire; as liberation approached, the Korean people vented their strongly nationalistic feelings in a clamor for full and immediate independence. In a simultaneous show of extreme political factionalism, some 70 organizations sprang up, each claiming to be best qualified to form a government. But while Korea's release from Japan came with the arrival of Russian and American occupation forces in August and September 1945, an independent government did not materialize until August 1948, and then only in the southern half of the country.

This new state was tested immediately by an insurgency designed to bring the whole of Korea under Communist domination. When conventional warfare opened with the same intent in June 1950, the insurgents lent support to the Communist aggressor; and even after open hostilities were brought to an inconclusive end in July 1953, vestiges of the insurgency remained for another year. Hence, among the varied problems confronting the new Republic of Korea (ROK) was the necessity to conduct counterinsurgency operations throughout the first six years of its existence.

The Korean cry for immediate sovereignty notwithstanding, valid reasons supported the Allied Powers' wartime declarations that Korea would become independent "in due course." Two needs were to be met beforehand under the supervision of an Allied military government: the regeneration of indigenous leadership and the rehabilitation of the Korean economy. Under

Japanese rule, few Koreans had held positions of importance in government, business, or the military service; and the Allies were unwilling to return full control to the Korean people until they had gained some experience in these areas. Furthermore, Korea's agriculture, industry, and trade has been geared to serve the needs of Japan; and severance of this long-established tie was bound to bring economic chaos. It was believed that a Korean government could best stand alone after the country's production was resurrected and redirected to meet Korean requirements.¹

Demarcation at the 38th Parallel

An unexpected problem was rooted in U.S.-U.S.S.R. arrangements for taking the surrender of Japanese troops stationed in Korea. The two nations had picked the 38th parallel of north latitude at the waist of the peninsula as a boundary between forces, the Americans to accept the surrender south of the line, the Russians north of it. The parallel marked only a temporary line for a single purpose, but the Russians considered it a permanent delineation between occupation zones, with passage from one to the other dependent upon permission of the military commander. This ruptured the administrative and economic unity of the country and portended difficulty and a longer delay in transferring governmental functions to the Korean people.

Hope of removing this obstacle rose when the United States presented the problem during a meeting of foreign ministers in Moscow in December 1945. As agreed at that time, a joint U.S.-U.S.S.R. commission was to develop the details of a provisional Korean government and of four-power trusteeship under which the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and China would guide the provisional government for a maximum of five years. But in the meetings of the commission, the Russian members made it abundantly clear that they were willing to reunite the two sections of the country only under a provisional Communist government. Persistent Russian demands to this end were as persistently refused by the Americans. The resulting impasse lasted until September 1947, when the United States finally laid the whole question of Korean independence before the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Establishment of the Republic of Korea

Under a resolution adopted by that body, a U.N. commission entered Korea at the turn of the year to supervise the free election of a legislative body whose members would then form a government. But Russian authorities blocked the commission's entry into northern Korea. As an alternative, the commission proceeded with the observance of an election in the accessible portion of the peninsula. A National Assembly of 200 representatives was voted into existence by the 20 million people in the south on May 10, 1948. A hundred seats were left vacant for representatives who might later be elected by the 9 million people living above the parallel.

Amid fruitless appeals to the people of the north to elect their representatives and join in establishing an independent government, the assemblymen drew up a constitution along democratic lines and elected Dr. Syngman Rhee, assembly chairman and longtime champion of Korean independence, to be the country's first president. With Rhee's inauguration, the government of the Republic of Korea was established on August 15, 1948. Although the new government's authority was denied above the 38th parallel, the U.N. General Assembly on the following December 12 recognized it as the only lawful government in Korea. The U.N. body at the same time called for the timely departure of all foreign troops from Korea and held the U.N. commission in southern Korea to observe and assist the further progress of Korean independence.

A Communist Government in the North

In reaction to the U.S.-U.N. achievement in southern Korea, the Soviet Union created a Communist regime in the north. The Russians had spread their doctrine upon entering Korea by appointing a People's Committee from Korean Communists, among whom the most influential had been brought back from outside the country. With Russian support and a Russian-picked leader, Kim Il Sung, this committee established a strong party organization and rapidly imposed Communist authority throughout the northern region. At the same time, the Russians organized a military force which included a strong political branch. Ten days after the Republic of Korea assumed authority in the south, the people in the north elected delegates to a Supreme People's Council from candidates chosen by the People's Committee. Then, on September 9, 1948, the Council proclaimed the establishment of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with Kim Il Sung as premier. A rapid expansion of the North Korean Army followed, after which the Russians, except for military advisers, withdrew from the northern area.

Upon its establishment, the government in northern Korea claimed jurisdiction over the entire peninsula. Such a claim obviously was void so long as the legitimate government remained in power below the parallel. But the ROK government was by no means an impenetrable bulwark, a fact that prompted the Rhee administration and U.S. authorities to arrange the retention of U.S. forces within the Republic until midway through 1949.

Internal Weaknesses of the South

Over the previous three years, dissatisfaction and disorder had become widespread in the south, the only part of Korea where objections could be voiced openly. Whereas the Koreans had at first greeted American forces as liberators, their joy diminished and then disappeared when immediate independence was denied; and their disappointment turned to resentment when they learned of the trusteeship proposal. Trusteeship was unpalatable to all Koreans, particularly

because of its apparent similarity to the protectorate that had preceded Japan's annexation of the country.

Internal discontent was intensified by the political factionalism evidenced in the numerous bids for power upon the arrival of U.S. occupation forces. While most of the political groups had a common objective in obtaining Korea's independence, a wide range of political beliefs and loyalties and a close correlation of political power with social prestige kept these groups in constant conflict. Among the many political leaders in southern Korea, Syngman Rhee was especially vehement in his opposition to the trusteeship plan. His antitrusteeship campaign undoubtedly gained him much of the influence that placed him in power.

Despite the fact that they had voted for the establishment of a republic, the South Korean people were not entirely pleased with a government whose authority reached no farther north than the 38th parallel. Many were more devoted to maintaining national boundaries than to establishing any particular form of government, an appreciation that tended to support reunification at any price.

Stronger objections to division at the parallel grew out of attendant economic problems. Recovery from the economic dislocation brought on by Korea's separation from Japan and progress toward a self-sufficient economy truly depended on integrating the output of both sections of Korea, since the southern region is predominantly agricultural, the north more industrial. Minerals, commercial forests, and water power exist in meager quantities below the parallel while the northern region is amply endowed with all three. The two regions thus complement each other: to thrive economically, the south needed to exchange its rice, barley, textiles, and manganese for the north's wood, coal, iron, fertilizer, and hydroelectric power. Because the barrier of the parallel made this impossible, the Republic and its citizens were destitute.

Establishment of Security Forces to Cope with Disorders

Over the three years taken to establish the Republic, political turmoil and adverse living conditions brought on many minor and several major civil disorders. Numerous demonstrations, strikes, riots, and increasing banditry occurred throughout the eight provinces in southern Korea. Fully expecting some postwar restlessness, American authorities upon entering Korea had built the framework of a national police organization and, both as a police reserve and the nucleus of a future army, a constabulary. These were intended to supplement and eventually replace American occupation forces in civil police functions. Recruiting and training went on while the police and constabulary units worked to maintain order within the provinces. Too often these fledgling organizations dealt oppressively with the people and only added to the latter's discontent. Even between the two groups professional jealousy gave rise to dissension and in some instances led to bitter, bloody clashes.

The two groups nonetheless improved under U.S. guidance. At the establishment of the Republic, the National Police numbered 45,000 in eight divisions; and the constabulary, now the

ROK Army, had 50,000 men divided among five brigades of three regiments each. Half the police were equipped with American pistols and carbines, the remainder with Japanese weapons. The army was similarly equipped, but with the addition of some machineguns, mortars, and antitank weapons.

Whereas these security forces were moderately successful in quelling disorders, the reasons for the disturbances continued to exist as the Rhee administration took office, and most opposition groups used the deleterious internal conditions as ammunition against the new government. But of the varied opposition within the Republic, only one group had sufficient strength, organization, and outside support to attempt to overthrow the Rhee government. This was the South Korean Labor Party (SKLP), a Communist group closely allied with the Communist regime in the north. It was through the South Korean Labor Party that the northern authorities opened a campaign to make good their jurisdictional claim.

INSURGENCY

Organized communism in Korea had been almost completely eliminated by the Japanese. But at the same time that it was reinstated above the 38th parallel by the Russians under Kim Il Sung, it was indigenously revived in the south around a single remaining cell in Seoul, the capital city, under a longtime leftist, Pak Hon Yong. This group, eventually calling itself the South Korean Labor Party, was soon in touch with the North Korean Labor Party. The two groups developed almost identical organizational structures and worked hand in hand to promote a Communist government for the whole of Korea.²

The Russian authority which promoted and solidified Communist control in the north was of course lacking below the parallel. For obvious reasons, Pak's group failed to win U.S. recognition when it not only presented its claim to political power along with the many other factions but even introduced itself as a "government." Most of the non-party support the SKLP possessed was subsequently lost when it adopted a pro-trusteeship line fitted to the demands made by the Russian members of the U.S.-U.S.S.R. joint commission. But because division of the country was also repugnant to the people, the SKLP regained some influence when it next attempted to promote a boycott of the U.N.-sponsored election. This effort nonetheless failed; and as a result of disturbances caused by its attempt to prevent the election, the party was driven underground by the counteraction of the U.S. military government.

Insurgent Strength, Organization, and Deployment

Despite failure and the necessity to operate underground, the SKLP remained a functioning organization that controlled both a sizable party membership and an armed guerilla force. No certifiable figures are available for any phase of the insurgency, but the party probably numbered

something over 140,000 members at the time the Republic of Korea was established in 1948. Perhaps 20,000 of these were hard-core Communists. The irregular force, assembled from party members, sympathizers, and bandits or other non-Communist opportunists, was possibly 5,000 strong.

The party maintained a headquarters, presumably in Seoul, and cells or committees, as they were sometimes called, in all provinces and in most districts, counties, and large towns. Party members had in fact even managed to join and form cells within the ROK Army.

Almost all of the irregulars were concentrated in three mountain areas on the mainland and in the Halla Mountains on Cheju Do, an island 80 miles off the mainland's southwestern tip. Some of the mainland guerrillas were clustered around the highest peaks of the axial Taebaek Mountains along the Republic's east coast; others were gathered near the center of the Republic atop a spur range stretching southwestward from the main Taebaek spine. By far the greatest number were concentrated in the southwestern corner of the mainland in the Chiri Mountains. These 750 square miles of mile-high forested peaks had been a refuge for bandits and partisans since the time of Japan's conquest of Korea. They now served as the principal SKLP guerrilla base.

Early Operations

SKLP missions always reflected the larger objectives of the northern Communist regime. Before June 25, 1950, the insurgents worked to increase popular dissatisfaction with the ROK government and to disrupt governmental control over the people. This weakening process was intended to force the acceptance of unification under terms to be proposed by the authorities in the north.

The first SKLP operation of any consequence after the formation of the Republic occurred on Cheju Do. On October 1, 1948, guerrillas came out of the Halla Mountains to strike the villages along the island shore. Homes were burned, and over 550 islanders were killed before ROK Army forces could restore order.

The next uprising was masterminded by a Communist cell within the ROK Army's 14th Regiment at Yosu, a port on the southwestern coast. This cell, numbering 300 men or fewer and composed mostly of noncommissioned officers, mutinied on October 19 as the regiment prepared to move to Cheju Do. By fanning antipolice sentiment, the Communist group stirred most of the regiment into rebellion, took over Yosu, then led the marauding force into surrounding towns. Party members and sympathizers in each town took control as the force moved on. By the morning of the 29th, the rebels controlled the 20-mile-long peninsula on which Yosu was located. Over 500 police and loyal army troops and a larger number of civilians had been killed. Although the rebellion was put down within a week, many of the rebel troops escaped in to the nearby Chiri Mountains to join the SKLP guerrillas.

A smaller uprising within the army's 6th Regiment occurred a week later at Taegu in the southeastern part of the Republic. Its suppression on November 4 ended SKLP attempts to incite rebellion within the ROK military. Meanwhile, SKLP guerrillas opened a series of raids against farms, villages, and isolated police installations within the areas near their mainland mountain bases. These raids were designed to support the SKLP political mission by enlarging the areas under guerrilla control and by creating doubt among the people as to the ability of the ROK government to protect them.

But the raids also had a second purpose—perhaps an overriding one—of obtaining food, weapons, ammunition, and other supplies. At this time, the guerrillas were only about 60 percent armed and they possessed only marginal stores of other provisions. Moreover, no more than a trickle of supplies, if that, came from the north. Supply shortages remained a constant problem for the guerrillas and proved to be a basic weakness of the insurgency.

Northern Infiltrators Step Up Operations

While the northern authorities failed to provide logistical support, they did increase the number and effectiveness of guerrilla raids by infiltrating men specially trained in guerrilla tactics. A North Korean Army school at Kangdong, just outside the Communist capital of Pyongyang, conducted the special training. Some students were northerners, but most were sent from the south by the SKLP. Before June 25, 1950, at least a thousand trained guerrillas, and perhaps twice that number, worked their way down the Taebaek Mountains and out to the southwest.

As these specialists joined the insurgents, the number of raids increased, especially after June 1949, when the strength of American forces in Korea was reduced to only a few hundred military advisers. Before the year ended, these raids disrupted the livelihood of a large bloc of the population, especially in the Ch'uri Mountain region. In company with the stepped-up raids, forces of the North Korean Army launched hundreds of forays into ROK territory along the 38th parallel, obviously to add to the pressure being exerted from within against the people and government.

Underground Activities and Propaganda

The SKLP also began a vigorous campaign of antigovernment harassment that extended beyond the guerrilla-controlled areas. Directed by Lee Chu Ha and Kim Sun Yong of the party's Underground Activities Guiding Unit, the insurgents provoked riots and strikes, harassed government officials by threats, abduction, and assassination; committed widespread robbery and arson; and disrupted telephone and telegraph communication.

SKLP propaganda, spread by word-of-mouth, handbills, and other means, blamed the ROK government for all troubles besetting the people and promised the redress of grievances. Before

June 1949, well-circulated messages branded American forces as invaders, demanded their withdrawal, and opposed the establishment of a U.S. military advisory group. After the Americans withdrew, the party line blamed the ROK government for the division of the country and called for a nationwide election of a new legislature. These SKLP themes emulated the Communist line being broadcast from northern Korea. But the combined campaign of terror and propaganda proved insufficient to force a new election.

The Insurgents' Political Offensive Fails

The insurgents and the Republic's northern adversary continued their efforts into 1950 with some apparent effect on the second election of national assemblymen on May 30, 1950. Just 32 incumbents were reelected, supporters of President Rhee held only 45 seats, and the political leaning of the legislature now was difficult to predict because of its large number of independents. Evidently encouraged by these results, the North Koreans on June 7 proposed that a general election throughout Korea be held the following August; then on June 19 they offered the alternative of forming a single government by uniting the ROK National Assembly with the Presidium, the comparable body in the north. This would have installed the Communists in power, since the ROK legislature then numbered 210 seats while the Presidium comprised over 3,000 members.

Communist hopes for this kind of reunification overestimated the weakness of the Rhee administration. There was no widespread clamor for acceptance, and the proposal was flatly rejected by the ROK government. At this negative reception, the North Koreans dropped their cold war strategy and ordered the execution of previously prepared plans to absorb the southern Republic by military conquest. The North Korean Army marched south on June 25, 1950.

Communist Guerrillas Assist the North Korean Invasion

When the invasion began, the SKLP made its guerrillas, now numbering around 7,000, available for supporting operations. Actually the insurgents already had made their greatest contribution to the North Korean Army's southward progress. As a result of previous guerrilla activity, the ROK Army had committed three divisions to counteroperations. This left only five divisions immediately available to oppose the invasion. Moreover, while the army had grown, training had been so often interrupted, largely for antiguerrilla missions, that none of its units had progressed much beyond company level exercises.

With only very minor direct assistance from the guerrillas, North Korean troops swept aside the ROK forces and the first U.S. units rushed from Japan to assist the Republic. Within six weeks, the North Korean Army was less than a hundred miles from Pusan, the port city at the southeastern tip of the peninsula, whose seizure would signal the final victory. But here the rapid advance came to a halt.

Soon after the invasion, the United Nations Security Council called on member nations to assist the ROK and arranged the establishment of the United Nations Command (UNC) under U.S. leadership. Ground, air, and naval combat units from 16 countries eventually joined the UNC. By August, enough of these forces, mostly U.S., had come alongside ROK troops to stem the enemy offensive. As the battlefield stabilized, the guerrillas became more active, infiltrating behind UNC lines from the west and north to set up ambushes along supply roads and rail lines and to attack various rear area installations. These harassments compelled the UNC to employ a substantial number of troops in security missions behind the front.

Bypassed Troops and Identified Sympathizers Join the Guerrillas

The UNC, grown still stronger, launched an offensive of its own on September 1950 and pushed its adversary into full retreat. By the end of September, no organized units of the North Korean Army remained in the Republic. Thousands of North Korean soldiers, however, were bypassed during the UNC pursuit of the retreating enemy. As the UNC continued its pursuit into northern Korea, a substantial part of the U.N. force was committed against the bypassed troops. A great number of North Korean stragglers nonetheless managed to stay hidden in the mountains and to join the SKLP guerrillas. Along with these came many SKLP members and sympathizers who heretofore had operated secretly within their communities but who had disclosed their identity as Communists and enemies of the Republic during the North Korean occupation of their home areas. Thus, by November, the strength of the insurgents took a tremendous leap forward to about 40,000. Just over half of these were armed, a rate that would remain almost constant regardless of future changes in guerrilla strength. As before, the largest concentration was in the Chiri Mountains.

For most of October, as UNC forces moved deep into northern Korea, the guerrillas were out of touch with their depleted allies to the north. Despite their large numbers, this lack of contact, the constant shortage of supplies, and the containing effect of UNC operations limited the guerrillas to activity directed toward self-preservation, mostly amounting to raids on the nearest farms and isolated police boxes.

The Guerrillas Are Organized as an Adjunct of the North Korean Army

But within another month, the guerrillas again were in communication with the north, mainly by messenger, and had been reorganized. Far to the north, UNC troops had encountered strong forces from Communist China and were being pushed back by the overwhelming numbers of the new enemy. The North Korean Army, as it began to recoup its recent losses, meanwhile established as part of its headquarters the 526th Army Unit, also called the Guerrilla Guidance Bureau, under a leader named Bae Chol. Through this unit, the activities of SKLP guerrillas would be coordinated with and designed to assist the new Communist drive to the south,

The guerrillas below the parallel were organized into two branches under the 526th Army Unit. Those in the Taebaeks became the 3d Branch Unit; those in the central and southwestern mountains, the 4th Branch Unit. The leaders and nuclei members of four other branches were scheduled to infiltrate from the north but only the 6th Branch Unit succeeded. The 6th based itself in the central mountains, leaving the 4th, still far the largest, to control activities in the southwest. Within each branch, the guerrillas continued to operate in bands varying from half a dozen to several hundred members. As had been customary, the bands identified themselves by areas occupied, by numerical designations, by the names of leaders, or by names with propaganda or party significance. They frequently reorganized and changed their names.

The Guerrillas' Mission and Tactics Support the Invaders

In performing their chief function of facilitating the southward advance of the regular forces, the insurgents' political missions remained basically the same: to strengthen party cells; spread Communist propaganda; create dissatisfaction with the ROK government; foster resentment of U.N. forces; disrupt governmental control over the people; and infiltrate the government, police, and army. To further these political objectives, the 526th Unit sent hundreds of specially trained men, some originally from the south, others from the north, into the Republic. The principal tactical missions were to drain manpower from the front, destroy arms and equipment, furnish military intelligence, cut or interdict lines and means of communication, and attack rear area installations. The precise tactics to be employed in meeting tactical objectives were largely the responsibility of branch unit leaders. So was logistical support.

In the execution of these assignments, the insurgents followed patterns previously established in their propaganda and harassment activity. Some sabotage was attempted, although the insurgents lacked sufficient materiel to achieve much effect. Their raids and ambushes were numerous and more effective. In these, the guerrillas followed the teachings of Communist China's renowned guerrilla leader, Mao Tse-tung: avoid open combat, attain surprise, strike, and disperse quickly. In raids against local communities and isolated installations the guerrillas lost few men and gained both supplies and control of an area inhabited by more than 5 million people, principally in the southwest. Ambushes—set mostly along mountain trails but also along roads and rail lines—resulted in even fewer guerrilla casualties. It was by ambush that the guerrillas inflicted the most casualties on antiguerrilla patrols.

On the other hand, while their ambushes harassed UNC supply activity, the guerrillas did not succeed in cutting routes of communication long enough to stop or even noticeably to interrupt the flow of equipment to the UNC front. The main reason for their failure, somewhat ironically, was that the guerrillas themselves lacked a supply pipeline from the north. As a result, they were obliged to concentrate much of their time and effort in obtaining their own

logistical necessities, and they seldom captured any explosives or other equipment with which to effectively interdict or cut the UNC lines of communication.

Most guerrilla casualties resulted not from guerrilla activities but from offensives mounted against them—a fact which in itself attested to the success of the guerrilla effort to hold at least a portion of the U.N. Command away from the front. This and their area control achievement were the insurgents' major accomplishments in supporting the second Communist drive to the south.

Guerrilla Activity Declines

By July 1951, guerrilla strength was down to 8,000. Casualties accounted for some of this decrease, but the sharp reduction was also due, perhaps in largest measure, to the fact that many guerrillas located in territory retaken by the advancing Communist forces had regained the status of regular troops. Whereas the remaining 8,000 would continue operating as before, their overall mission had changed again by July. For although Communist forces had pushed the UNC out of northern Korea and had penetrated ROK territory, UNC forces had blunted the Communist troop advance and in countermoves had returned to the vicinity of the 38th parallel. Both sides, by July, had decided to negotiate an end to the war. Consequently, the battlefield stabilized along a line straddling the parallel; and for the next two years, as armistice negotiations continued, battle action would remain limited to a 10-mile strip centered on this line.

On June 27, the Pyongyang radio dropped its "drive-the-enemy-into-the-sea" slogan and adopted a "drive-the-enemy-to-the-38th-parallel" line. Since the Communists were not now seeking a military conquest, the main mission of the insurgent force was to remain well organized, increase its strength and influence, and conduct harassing operations in anticipation of some future campaign coordinated with the regime in the north to overcome the ROK government.

The gradual change of objectives in the war was accompanied by a decline in the hitherto close direction of guerrilla operations through the 526th Army Unit. In late spring 1951, as UNC forces were defeating the last phase of the Communist offensive, Lee Yong Sang, who in preinvasion days had been the North Korean ambassador to the Republic, was sent south to command guerrilla activities. Lee and his deputy, Yo Un Chol, established headquarters in the Chiri Mountains, which as a result of counteroperations and guerrilla withdrawals elsewhere was the single remaining guerrilla stronghold. Although the Taebaek region and the central mountain area were not completely clear of guerrillas, they were merely nuisances to the people living in those sectors and to the government of the Republic.

After armistice negotiations began, Lee and his SKLP lieutenants directed in southwestern Korea insurgent operations that generally followed the previously established pattern. SKLP propaganda continued to predict eventual victory for the Communists and warned the people

against supporting the ROK government. The guerrillas backed up this line with more terror raids and continued to harass rear area civil and military installations and activities. For four months, despite the change in overall objective, the insurgency retained its previous tempo.

Then, in December 1951, the static conditions of the battlefield permitted the UNC to open a strong antiguerrilla effort. The insurgents, who for three years had withstood all countermeasures, now faced a more dedicated effort to eliminate them; and their operations gradually changed until they became simply an endeavor to survive. Although an armistice ended hostilities at the main battlefield in July 1953, the intensified operations against the insurgents continued for an additional year; and, whereas the war itself ended with Korea divided much as before, the counterinsurgency produced decisive results.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

While disturbances in southern Korea had been commonplace from the day of liberation, these were not associated with a coordinated Communist movement until April 1948. It was at that time that the SKLP was pressing hard for a boycott of the May 10 election. Communist activity even then was judged no more than troublesome opposition until the Communist cell in the 14th Regiment mutinied and took over Yosu in October. It was the opinion of many American authorities then in the Republic that the revelation of effectively organized communism within the army implied a serious threat to the ROK government, a threat so immediate that the Republic's existence hinged on the new government's ability to restore control in the Yosu peninsula rapidly.³

Early Military and Police Measures

Brig. Gen. Song Ho Seung, then ROK Army Chief, personally conducted the military countermeasures. With the help of nine American advisers, General Song pulled army and police units from other districts, advanced from the west and east to close off the peninsula, then attacked south to clear it. The port of Yosu was recaptured on October 27, 1948. Song at the same time instituted a purge of Communists from the army. Over 1,500 eventually were discovered and removed. Except for the brief outbreak at Taegu, the army thereafter remained loyal to the government.

Home Minister T. Y. Yun meantime ordered a roundup of Communists and sympathizers outside the military establishment, and the ROK legislature passed a National Security Law outlawing communism. The enforcement of these decrees to some extent became a witch hunt in which liberals and moderates as well as leftists were driven underground. In October 1949, the ROK government relaxed its enforcement of the National Security Law to observe a "leftist confession period." This arrangement offered SKLP members and sympathizers a penalty-free

opportunity to confess their wrongdoing and transfer their loyalty to the Republic. But no response was recorded.

In the area of propaganda, which was never fully appreciated or exploited as a counter-measure, the Minister of Defense established an Information and Education Bureau in December 1948. The main mission of the bureau was to encourage cooperation between the people and security forces in maintaining internal peace. But in the year following, almost all bureau members were kept busy at the 38th parallel broadcasting propaganda into northern Korea.

Throughout most of 1949, counterinsurgency operations were conducted on a local basis. Whereas the national police came under the Minister of Home Affairs, each police unit actually was controlled by the governor of the province in which it was located. To accommodate local operations, the greatest police strength was situated within the three areas of heaviest guerrilla activity. While the principal objective of the army was to complete its training under American advisers, some of its units were as active as the police in civil security operations. Like the police those army units stationed in the interior participated in maintaining or restoring order in the vicinity of their assigned posts.

The results of security operations varied with the locality and the nature of the disturbances. Police antiriot techniques effectively quieted disorderly strikes and demonstrations. Perhaps the biggest police prize was Lee Yung Dung, the top Communist youth organizer in the south, who was arrested in Seoul after he had robbed a bank. With less success, army units from platoon to battalion in size periodically patrolled surrounding mountain areas in search of guerrilla bands. Some of the patrols were caught in ambush; others often found suspected areas vacant. The army troops nonetheless inflicted hundreds of casualties and intercepted many of the specially trained guerrillas infiltrating through the mountains from the north. Least effective were efforts to combat guerrilla raids. In somewhat the manner of a fire brigade, security troops often rushed to the scene of a raid only to find themselves limited, because of the guerrillas' classic hit-and-run tactics, to a fruitless pursuit of the insurgents. Between July and December 1949, when guerrilla raids increased following the departure American occupation forces, army units mounted 542 such counter guerrilla actions, an average of three a day.

Despite their losses, the insurgents were not noticeably inhibited by the local counterefforts. As previously noted, SKLP propaganda and harassment operations flourished during 1949, and the guerrillas continued to terrorize large segments of the population. Local recruitment and infiltration from the north compensated for casualties taken in encounters with ROK security forces.

The First Large-Scale Antiguerilla Operations

In response to this obvious fact, the ROK Army opened, in December 1949, a Winter Punitive Operation, its strongest and first centrally directed antiguerilla effort.

From a force now organized into eight divisions and approaching 100,000 men, Maj. Gen. Chae Byong Duk, the new Chief of Staff, committed three divisions to the campaign. None of these three was at full strength, and the total force committed was somewhere near 20,000. Each division established headquarters near one of the main guerrilla bases: the 2d Division based itself at Ch'ongju near the central guerrilla stronghold; the 3d, at Taegu below the guerrillas' Taebaek base; and the 5th, at Kwangju, at the western edge of the Chiri Mountains. These forces had received no special training in antiguerrilla operations. No such training was given to any army force during the entire period of the counterinsurgency.

Using conventional combat patrol tactics, the army troops swept the nearby mountains, most methodically the Chiri and Taebaek heights. At the same time, members of the Information and Education Bureau, now part of army headquarters, made a small, primitive effort through lectures and literature to encourage the people living in or near the guerrilla stronghold areas to have confidence in and to support the army effort.

As operations continued into the spring months of 1950, the campaign produced some desired results. Total guerrilla strength was not reduced; by the June 1950 estimate, the guerrillas numbered around 7,000. But in March, guerrilla activity had begun to decline and, in May, it dropped off sharply.

Arrest of Insurgent Leaders

While no direct connections are clearly defined, the March decline in guerrilla activity coincided with the arrest of Kim Sam Yong and Lee Chu Ha, the leaders of the SKLP Underground Activities Guiding Unit, and the May drop accompanied the arrest of Song Si Pak, an official of the North Korean Labor Party working inside the Republic. Pak Hon Yong, the top SKLP official, seems to have disappeared at this time. In view of current and later events, it is quite possible that Pak was in North Korea either for protection or instructions. In any event, there is no record of his presence within the Republic after the spring of 1950.

After the March arrests, ROK officials erroneously concluded that the SKLP had been dissolved, and the marked decline in guerrilla operations was interpreted to mean peace within the Republic. It was more the lull before the storm.

Combat Police Battalions

Because army operations in the interior, as well as guard duty at the parallel, were seriously interfering with the army training program, U.S. military advisers met with army and police officials in January 1950. They decided to form 22 combat police battalions. After training in conventional basic tactics, these would relieve the interior army units and thereafter function as antiguerrilla forces. One such battalion was formed in April. Because of a lack of funds, equipment, and interest on the part of the Minister of Home Affairs, no more

took the field until the first two weeks of June. By June 15, 14 combat police battalions were on station and some army units had returned to garrison for training.

Only a few days after combat police battalions began taking over antiguerrilla responsibilities, the North Korean Army invaded the Republic. Defensive operations against the North Korean regulars rapidly drew away all ROK forces, including the combat police battalions, from operations against the guerrillas. But even a full ROK commitment failed to turn the invasion, and the first American forces to arrive only slowed it. In just six weeks, the North Koreans controlled all but the southeastern corner of the Republic, including the three guerrilla concentration areas.

Regular War Limits the Antiguerilla Operations

In the month and a half that the battlelines were stabilized in the southeast, episodic guerrilla operations prompted the UNC to commit civil and military police to guard lines of communication and rear area installations. Other than that, perhaps the most significant event was the discovery by counterintelligence agents with the U.S. 25th Division of an SKLP intelligence net at the port of Masan near the southern anchor of the UNC line and not many miles east of the Chiri Mountains. This net, headed by a prominent Masan newspaperman, Dum Jo Han, had operated in the port town since November 1948 and had developed productive contacts with unsuspecting government officials.

In the hunt for the thousands of bypassed enemy soldiers that started after UNC forces reversed the course of the war in the fall of 1950 and pushed the North Korean Army out of the Republic, the counteroperation was directed mainly at protecting the supply lines to UNC forces advancing rapidly toward the northern border of Korea. South of Seoul, two American and two ROK divisions, accompanied by numerous police units, screened with special care the areas bordering the main UNC supply road between Pusan and Seoul and patrolled the known concentration areas, particularly the central and southwestern mountains.

Police battalions and four newly activated ROK Army units, the 1st, 3d, 5th, and 7th Anti-guerrilla Battalions—special only by designation, not by training—engaged or contained guerrillas located near the 38th parallel in central Korea. The guerrillas in this area were mostly remnants of the North Korean 10th Division and reportedly were directed by Gen. Kim Chack, who had commanded the forward echelon of the North Korean Army General Headquarters.

Above the parallel, forward reserve units protected the lengthening UNC supply lines against interdiction attempts by guerrillas, formerly regulars of the North Korean Army, who had taken refuge in the high Taebaek spine between the two main arms of the advancing U.N. command.

American and ROK forces engaged in no coordinated, centrally directed campaign, but conducted counter guerrilla efforts independently within assigned sectors. Nor, in the main, were

the most important tactical device. In the nature of demand, the guerrillas were forced to operate in small groups. These were heavily armed patrols that maintained contact with the division artillery either directly or through liaison planes or overhead. The patrols drove rapidly through an area to flush out guerrillas, then just as rapidly brought down artillery fire on them. Through October, substantial numbers of the guerrillas were eliminated, daily totals reaching as high as 500 killed or captured.

Counterinsurgency Slows and the Guerrilla Threat Rises

In November 1950, when the two American divisions were called to the front to reinforce the UNC advance toward the northern border, a newly activated ROK Army division replaced them in the south. The new division and the two ROK divisions originally committed continued counteroperations, but only until December, when they too were ordered to the front to assist in breaking the new enemy push to the south led by forces from Communist China. Until January 1951, only police battalions and the ROK Army's several antiguerrilla units, soon to be re-named security battalions, operated against the guerrillas and then waged only a campaign of containment.

At mid-January 1951, the lowest estimate of guerrilla strength stood at 20,000, the highest at 37,500. Around 6,000 of these were reported to be in the lower portion of the Taebak stronghold, most of them former members of the North Korean 10th Division who had infiltrated from their previous location near the parallel as the new offensive gained ground. Their strength, past experience as regulars, and high ranking professional leader, Maj. Gen. Lee Ban Nam, increased the threat posed by their location so deep inside the Republic. Hence, although the Chinese offensive eventually demanded the assignment of all major UNC units to the front, the U.S. 1st Marine Division, while recovering from losses taken during the previous two months, was committed against this guerrilla group on January 18.

The Pohang Guerrilla Hunt

The marines called their assignment the Pohang Guerrilla Hunt, naming it after the port town at the lower edge of the 1,600 square miles in which they were to operate. Calling it a hunt was also appropriate, for, as in many earlier counteroperations, the guerrillas were more difficult to find than to fight. Assisted by police battalions and a regiment of South Korean marines, the U.S. forces systematically patrolled all roads and mountain trails but only occasionally flushed guerrillas out of hiding. Upon receiving reports of guerrilla activity from civilians or the police, marines hastened to the scene, but not always in time. Some guerrillas were located by blocking off one edge of an area while a drive moved toward the blocks from the opposite direction.

Two battalion sized attacks were launched against guerrilla strongholds. The first, on January 24, 1951, resulted in 161 guerrillas killed or captured, the largest single bag at any time during the hunt; the other, on February 6, hit nothing, in an area known to have been occupied by guerrillas the previous day. By February 14, the closing date of the guerrilla hunt, the marines had killed 120 and captured 184 guerrillas. Marine losses were 16 dead, 148 wounded, and 16 missing.

The elusiveness of the guerrillas was, in part and in a peculiar way, creditable to effective evasive tactics. General Lee, one prisoner reported, had become a victim of acute melancholia and had directed no more of a campaign than one of alternate hiding and flight. It also appeared that Lee's superiors in the north had abandoned his group. A message from higher headquarters, delivered to Lee shortly after the start of the marine countereffort, said in effect: Get out if you can; otherwise, stay where you are. Most of the guerrillas probably got out, for, despite the small number of casualties inflicted during the marine operation, the Taebaek area after February was no longer a guerrilla stronghold.

From March through November 1951, ROK police and army security battalions waged effective local campaigns of reduction and containment. The estimate of guerrilla strength was down to 15,000 by April and to 8,000 by July. By the latter date, the cumulative wearing-down effect of counteroperations and probably the deterioration of command lines from the north prompted the withdrawal of the guerrillas' 6th Branch Unit from the central stronghold area to the southwest. Hence, the SKLP guerrillas were now concentrated in a single stronghold in the Chiri Mountains. On December 2, when UNC pulled two ROK divisions from the static battlefront and opened a strong attack against this remaining stronghold, estimates of guerrilla strength ranged from the July figure of 8,000 down to 6,300.

Operation RATKILLER

The first effort to clear the Chiri Mountain region, called Operation RATKILLER, was commanded by Gen. Paik Sun Yup, one of the ROK Army's best officers. The ROK 8th Division and ROK Capital Division plus the equivalent of another division in army security battalions and police were combined as Task Force PAIK to press a three-phase attack. Phase I began on December 2, 1951, was directed toward the central Chiri peak itself. While security battalions and police blocked the trails and other likely routes of escape around the mountain, the two divisions closed in on the peak—the 8th Division from the north, the Capital Division from the south. By December 14, the two divisions reached the summit after killing 1,600 and capturing 1,800 guerrillas.

For Phase II, the two divisions moved about 50 miles to the northern edge of the guerrilla stronghold to clear a high mountain pass just above the town of Chonju. From December 19 to January 4, the ROK forces combed this area and raised the guerrilla casualty count to more

5,000 killed or captured. The fact that the casualty figure exceeded current estimates of the guerrilla strength may have indicated that the estimates had been too low. Even as the later screening of prisoners verified a sizable number of the captives were innocent inhabitants of the area.

For the third and last phase of RATAKILLER, General Paik's forces returned to the Chiri peak to rescreen for guerrillas who had been overlooked or who had filtered into the massif during the previous three weeks. The Capital Division played the larger role. Beginning on January 6, one regiment blocked the northern exits from the peak while the other two regiments, in two ranks, moved over the mountain from the south. Thereafter, Paik's forces conducted mopup operations until March 16, 1952. The decision to rescreen proved profitable. Guerrilla losses in the final phase raised the total for Operation RATAKILLER to 11,000 killed and 5,700 captured. Fifty major leaders were captured, although Lee Yong Sang was not one of them. Another 4,300 persons taken captive were carefully screened, found innocent, and released. Although casualties suffered by Task Force PAIK were not reported in figures, they were light.

Mopup Operations in 1952-1954

Despite the large total of guerrilla casualties reported for Operation RATAKILLER, over 4,000 guerrillas were estimated still to be located in the Chiri region. To eliminate these, a division-sized group of army security battalions and police units began a series of mopup operations on March 17. The first, called Operation FERRET, continued until July 12. This operation was followed immediately by Operation MONGOOSE, which involved security forces totaling almost two divisions for a little more than a month. In August 1952, a division of security forces took over the screening task and for over a year combed the Chiri Mountains regularly and systematically. By the time this effort, called Operation BLOODHOUND, closed at the end of November 1953, the guerrilla strength had been reduced, according to estimates, to about 1,000. During BLOODHOUND, on September 17, 1953, a patrol from one of the security battalions found and killed the top guerrilla leader, Lee Yong Sang.

The armistice agreement ending the Korean war had been in effect over four months at the close of Operation BLOODHOUND. With the aim of bringing counterinsurgency operations to an even more decisive close, ROK security forces in two-division strength opened Operation TRAMPLE on December 1, 1953. For months the army and police screened and rescreened the southwestern mountains. When the TRAMPLE operation closed midway through 1954, all important guerrilla leaders had been killed or captured, and all guerrilla bands had been either completely destroyed or broken up. No more than 200 guerrillas in scattered, leaderless groups were believed to be at large when this final operation ended.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

The military truce that ended the open confrontation for strife-ridden South Korea prior to the finish of Operation TRAMBLE was to have been followed by the final settlement of political issues at governmental level. But the governmental negotiators had failed to find solutions. Hence, as the last vestige of the insurgency was eliminated, both the political and military situations in Korea remained unchanged from the date of the cease-fire. The whole of Korea remained politically divided between opposing ideologies along a demarcation line straddling the 38th parallel. Above and below a 4-kilometer demilitarized zone centered on this demarcation line, the former military opponents continued to hold well-organized defensive positions. At the village of Panmunjom in the west, the demarcation line ran through a conference area where delegates from each of the opposing forces met periodically but settled few important matters. The prognosis was that this situation might continue to exist for some time to come.

Within the Republic of Korea, the political situation remained basically unchanged. Having been re-elected in 1952, President Rhee continued to hold office. The legislature continued to be a mixture of Rhee supporters, Rhee opponents, and a large group of independents. Among the people at large, political factionalism continued to flourish. Although no clear evidence is available, it is probably a fair assumption that some SKLP cells still functioned.

Social and economic conditions, already distressing at the formation of the Republic, had further worsened as a result of the war. Unemployment, shortages of consumer goods, inflation, lack of an industrial base, and all the other social and economic ills that had long existed, had been added widespread property damage and a monumental refugee problem. Relief was reaching the people to a measurable extent, but lasting reforms and recovery were not yet in sight. The Republic and its people, it appeared, would remain poverty-stricken for some time to come.

In military strength, and therefore in national security, there had been tremendous growth. From a poorly trained force of five brigades in 1948, the ROK Army was now an experienced well-organized, and well-equipped force of 16 divisions. Alongside these still stood a strong command of U.N. forces.

The cumulative effect of the counterinsurgency since December 1951 had of course freed the Republic from the internal Communist threat. Despite the continued political bickering, no other political group appeared inclined or able to attempt what the SKLP and its northern ally had failed to accomplish. Any internal challenge to the Republic and the Rhee administration would have to come from some other more powerful, better organized quarter.

NOTES

¹The background section is based on: U.S. Department of State, Korea, 1945 to 1948 (Publication No. 3395, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1948), pp. 1-26; U.S. Department of State, The Conflict in Korea, Events Prior to the Attack on June 25, 1950 (Publication No. 4266, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1951), pp. 1-7; (Maj.) Robert K. Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1962), pp. 1-7, 16, 28-29, 31, 36, 41-42, 73-74, and 92-93; Roy E. Appleman, South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 1-5; U.S. Department of the Army, Korea, 1950 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1952), pp. 1-6; Clifford R. Barnett, Republic of Korea, A Country Background Study (Washington: Human Relations Area Files, Inc., 1955), p. "A" JF-9; Republic of Korea, Ministry of National Defense, Troop Education and Information Bureau, War History Compilation Association, Korean War History for One Year: 1 May 1950 to 30 June 1951 (Seoul), pp. A5, A8-A9, A16, A44-A45, A121, and A158-59 (copy in files of Office of Chief of Military History, U.S. Department of the Army).

²The insurgency section is based on: Republic of Korea, Korean War History, pp. A9, A16, A19, A66-A67, A109-112, A153-57, A160, and A166-69; Fred H. Barton, Salient Operational Aspects of Paramilitary Warfare in Three Asian Areas (ORO-T-228; Chevy Chase, Md.: Operations Research Office, 1953), pp. 9-19, 22, 24, 129, 132, 214-15, and 236; Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, pp. 39-40, 73-74, 97, and 113; Appleman, South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu, pp. 7-12 and 721-28; Department of State, The Conflict in Korea, pp. 17, 19, 23-24 and 30; Report of XXIV Corps Staff Conference, 12 July 1946 (copy in OCMH, Department of the Army, files), "History of the Korean Army, 1 July 1948 to 15 October 1948" (an unsigned paper in OCHM files); (Maj.) John P. Reed, "The Truth About the Yosu Incident" (a paper in OCMH files), and (Lt. Col.) John E. Beebe, "Beating the Guerrilla," Military Review, XXXV (December 1955).

³The counterinsurgency section is based on: Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, pp. 39-41, 58, 67, 73-78, 92-93, 96, and 109; Republic of Korea, Korean War History, pp. A16, A66-A67, A80-A81, A116-17, and A169; Barton, Salient Operational Aspects of Paramilitary Warfare, pp. 13-14, 18-19, 26, 91, 101, 122, 126-27, 129, and 135n; Appleman, South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu, pp. 6, 12-14, 261, 383, 477-78, 613, 618, 638, and 721; Lynn Montross, (Maj.) Hubbard D. Kuokka, and (Maj.) Norman W. Hicks, U.S. Marine Operations in Korea, 1950-1953 (The East-Central Front Vol. IV; Washington: Government Printing Office, 1962), pp. 41-58; Barnett, Republic of Korea, p. "A" 2C-13; Battleground Korea, the Story of the 25th Infantry Division (25th Infantry Division Historical Council; Atlanta: Albert Love Enterprises, 1951), ch. 5; (Brig. Gen.) G. B. Barth, Tropic Lightning and Faro Leaf in Korea (a paper on OCMH files), p. 41; Reed, "The Truth About the Yosu Incident"; and Beebe, "Beating the Guerrilla."

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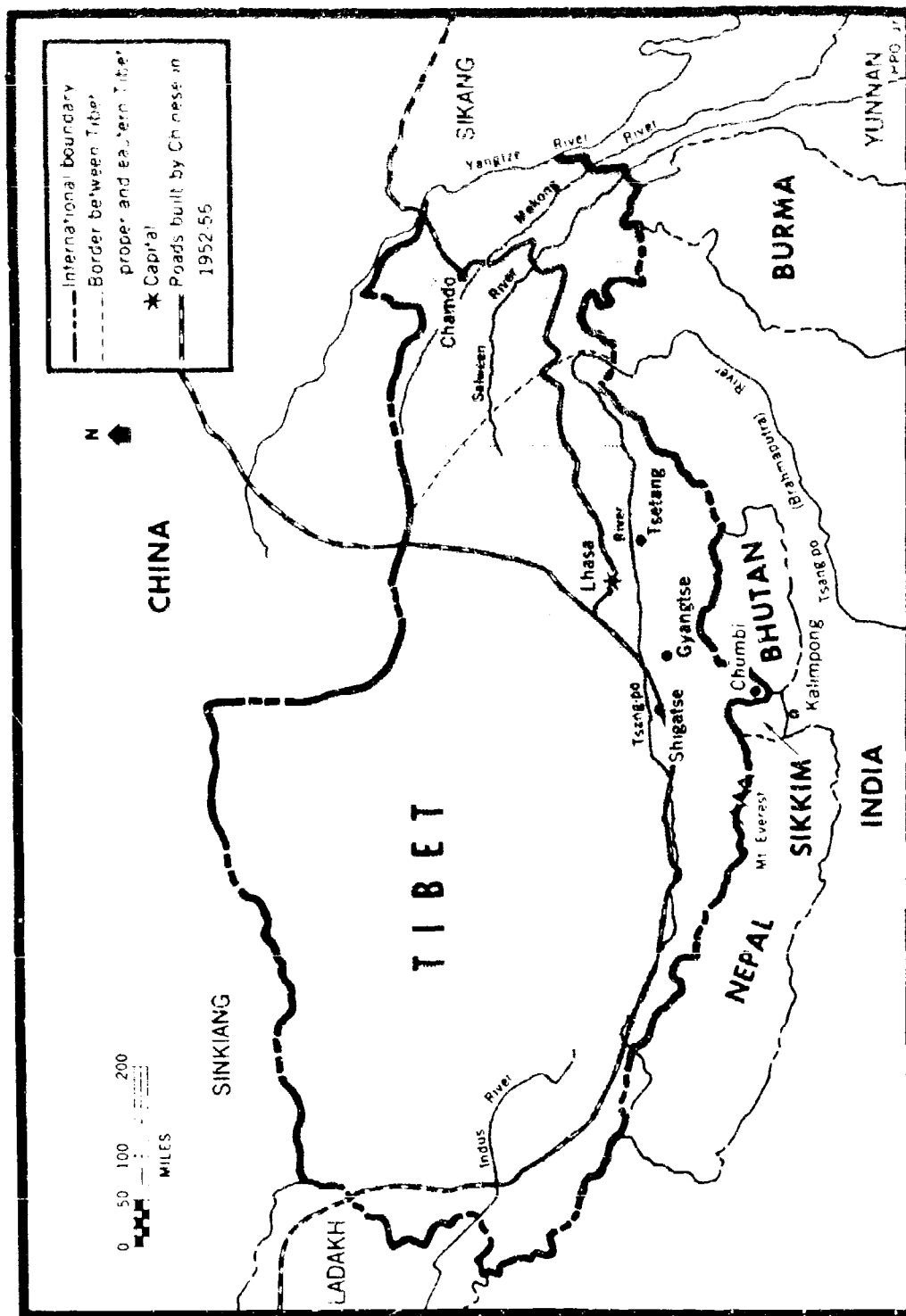
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A block of classified official records generated by various commands and headquarters within the Far East Command during the years 1945-54 are held by the National Archives in Alexandria, Va. When these documents are declassified or otherwise made available for research, they will provide amplification of the counterinsurgency in the Republic of Korea.

Chapter Eighteen

TIBET 1951-1960

by William C. Johnstone



TIBET (1951-1960)

Chapter Eighteen
TIBET (1951-1960)

by William C. Johnstone

Continuing China's historic claim over Tibet, the Chinese Communists used both conciliatory gestures and all-out military force to impose Chinese cultural and Communist political hegemony — in one of the least publicized and most brutal episodes of internal conflict of recent times.

BACKGROUND

The insurgency that occurred in Tibet after 1951 was directed against the occupation forces of the Chinese Communist regime, which contended that Tibet was an integral part of China and took the position that occupation of the area and suppression of the rebellion were purely internal affairs. This point of view was tacitly accepted by India, Great Britain, the United States, and even the Chinese Nationalist government on Taiwan. Thus, no effective outside aid was given to the Tibetan insurgents, and the Chinese Communists were indirectly helped in their suppression of the rebellion.

Throughout its history, Tibet has been isolated from the outside world. Very few Westerners have visited the country, and it has been imperfectly explored and surveyed. Until after World War II, communications within the country and with the outside were extraordinarily primitive; for example, there were no wheeled vehicles in the whole of Tibet until the Chinese occupation forces constructed roads. Indeed, Tibet's boundaries have never been fully demarcated and Tibetan claims and Chinese counterclaims to large areas to the north and east have in the past been the cause of numerous armed clashes and diplomatic exchanges.¹

Political Tibet, or Tibet proper, with its capital at Lhasa, is an area of some 500,000 square miles, twice the size of Texas. Here Tibetan rulers have continuously exercised both temporal and spiritual power from the 8th century to 1950, when the Chinese Communists began a full-scale occupation.

The Land and Its People

Tibet has often been called the roof of the world. Three-fourths of it is a high, tangled mass of mountain ranges, and most of its plateaus and valleys lie at altitudes of 15,000 feet or

higher and are sparsely populated. The area of Tibet proper rises from east to west and is enclosed by mountains on three sides; on the north, by the Kuen Lun and Tang La ranges; on the west by the Karakorum and Ladakh ranges; and on the south, by the Himalayas.² The sources of many of the great rivers of Asia are in Tibet: the Yangtze, the Mekong, the Salween, the Tsang-po (Brahmaputra), the Suture, the Karnali, and the great Indus. The easiest approach to the whole area is from southwestern China. There is also a small but important access corridor from India, through the Chumbi valley, between the small states of Sikkim and Bhutan.

Lhasa, at 2,000 feet, and much of eastern Tibet have an average summer temperature of 80° F.; in winter the temperature rarely falls below 5° F. In the higher plateaus and valleys, summer temperatures rise only to 60° F., and winter ones fall as low as -25° F. Rainfall averages 16-18 inches annually and snow remains all year on the mountains above altitudes of 12,000 or 15,000 feet. The eastern provinces of Tibet proper, comprising about two-thirds of the country, contain about three-fourths of the population, estimated to be between 2.5 and 3 million.³

Ethnographically, Tibet includes the large area north of the Himalaya ranges, primarily inhabited by people of Tibetan racial stock, who have long been under the guidance and influence of Tibetan lamas in the great monasteries. It extends north and east into parts of the Chinese provinces of Sinkiang, Szechuan, and Sikang; it also includes Ladakh, the northern district of Kashmir.

The Tibetans are not a Chinese people and the Chinese have looked upon them as a separate race for 2,000 years. They are descendants of early migrants from Central Asia and Mongolia, with some intermixture with the tribes from Yunnan and adjacent areas of China. In eastern Tibet, the Khamba (sometimes spelled Khampa) and Amdowa tribesmen have long been noted for their belligerency toward any evidence of central control by Lhasa. This belligerency has been tempered by the all-pervading influence of the lamas and monks of the great monasteries, numbering perhaps as many as 300,000 throughout all of Tibet proper.⁴ It is these eastern Tibetans who were particularly resistant to Chinese authority and who, after 1950, supplied the principal rebel forces against the Chinese.

Buddhism and the Dalai Lama

Buddhism was brought into Tibet around 700 A. D. and was modified and adapted into a unique religious system. Thousands of young boys—traditionally, one boy from each family—became monks, living a celibate life in monasteries supervised by the senior monks or lamas. The spiritual and temporal ruler of Tibet was the Dalai Lama, traditionally "discovered" as a small boy by means of religious divination and subsequently enthroned in Lhasa. The first Dalai Lama, T'song-Khapa (Lobzang Trapka), was installed in the capital in 1357 A. D. For a long time he was primarily a spiritual ruler while laymen exercised temporal power, as in most kingdoms of Asia.

Chinese Influence and Role

In 1642, the powerful monasteries around Shigatse in south central Tibet, particularly the Tashilhunpo Monastery, were able to exert enough influence to "discover" a secondary spiritual leader, the Panchen Lama. The Chinese have traditionally seen in the person of the Panchen Lama a vehicle of potential Chinese domination of Tibet, since the successive Dalai Lamas and their religious and lay advisers have remained implacably hostile to any increase in Chinese influence. Until 1965, the Chinese extolled the seventh Panchen Lama, Chokyi Gyaltzen, as the symbol of Tibetan "autonomy" in Lhasa.

Until 1720, Tibet exhibited the common pattern of Asian politics, as factions rose and fell. Rival groups fought for power by mobilizing support from the chief lamas of the great monasteries, by bargaining and diplomacy, and sometimes by fighting. In 1720, the Ch'ing (Manchu) emperors of China were able to establish an overlordship of sorts over Tibet proper. Although Chinese armed forces and representatives of the Emperor were present in Lhasa to "guide" the Tibetans and enforce their advice, the general structure of government and religion in Tibet was not greatly disturbed. As Manchu rule in China weakened toward the end of the 19th century, the Dalai Lama was able to assume temporal power in 1895. Irritated at this virtual assertion of independence, the Chinese Emperor, who regarded the Dalai Lama as his vassal, sent armed expeditions to Tibet to enforce Chinese suzerainty over the area. In 1904, the Dalai Lama and a small entourage were forced to flee to India, maintaining a kind of government-in-exile until Sun Yat-sen's revolution in China overthrew the Manchus in 1911. Chinese troops were forced to withdraw from Tibet in 1912, leaving only nominal Chinese representation in Lhasa. Taking advantage of chaotic conditions in China, the 13th Dalai Lama returned to Lhasa in 1913 and assumed political control of Tibet proper.⁵ "From 1912 to 1959, there was no Chinese law, no Chinese judge, no Chinese policeman on the street corner; there was no Chinese newspaper, no Chinese soldier, and even no representative of the Chinese Government" in Tibet.⁶

Economic Conditions Under a Thearchy

The temporal power of the Dalai Lama and the great monasteries rests on the inseparability of church and state in Tibet. As in most Asian kingdoms before the period of colonialism, all land in Tibet belonged to the ruler. Very early, large grants of land were made to the monasteries and to certain Tibetan nobles of the court in Lhasa. Small landholdings were given to faithful retainers or soldiers by dispensation of the Dalai Lama or his deputies. Tibetan farmers were under the control of agents of the landlord and, by the present century, a sizable middle class of "supervisors" had developed. Under this system, which the Chinese Communists were to call a feudal or slave system, the large monasteries accumulated considerable wealth and, through the allegiance of the peasants on their lands, a considerable amount of

political power. This was also true of a number of lay Tibetan nobles who had received large grants of land.⁷

Regardless of Chinese Communist charges about serfdom and feudalism, the Tibetan people, according to many objective observers, were not generally downtrodden or exploited by the landed proprietors, whether lamas or nobles. A large proportion of the Tibetans were nomadic herdsmen, under no control except for the general influence of the lamas and monks. The Tibetan people as a whole enjoyed a fairly high standard of living by Asian standards. Every Tibetan was a trader, and barter rather than exchange of goods for money was the rule. Until 1950, Tibet was a net exporter of food and no serious famines occurred in the country. Main exports were wool, skins, hides, and borax in the amount of approximately \$1 million a year. These exports were more than enough to balance imports of brick tea, porcelains, and silk from China and of iron, copper, cotton textiles, rice, sugar, and household goods from India. The principal trade route ran south from Lhasa through the Chumbi valley to Kalimpong and thence to Calcutta.⁸

Governmental Structure

Prior to 1950, the Tibetan government had a dual form of organization. Leading lamas shared governmental power with lay nobles. The chief administrative organ was a council (the Kashag) and both monks and lay Tibetans held posts in the administration of the various provinces and districts. This hierarchical form of government, although highly undemocratic by Western standards, worked well for the Tibetans. Peasants and herdsmen had a channel for the expression of grievances through the civil or religious administrators. Unemployment was extremely low, and the family system took care of those who were indigent. The tribal system in eastern Tibet followed longstanding traditions which provided many of the modern "social services" that are assigned to government in the West.

In the period between 1913 and 1950, the Tibetan government under the Dalai Lama was virtually independent and carried on its own foreign relations with the British and Indians. In 1949, there was a British mission in Lhasa, and Indian trade agents were located in the principal trading centers close to the Indian border. The British manned radio communications centers in Lhasa and in Chamdo, the capital of eastern Tibet, for the Tibetan government. The Chinese also had a radio station in Lhasa.

China Capitalizes on Internal Unrest

In spite of what seemed to be the peaceful character of Tibet and the adequate operations of its government, the Khamba and Amdowa tribesmen in eastern Tibet chafed at Lhasa's control. There is evidence that, after 1945, these tribes and their leaders had become especially restive and were plotting to achieve a greater autonomy from Lhasa, some even talking of the

possibility of marching on the capital and seizing control of the government. Chinese officials in nearby areas were perfectly aware of these developments and were themselves plotting to take over large portions of eastern Tibet, which they regarded as rightfully a part of China. The Chinese Nationalist government in Chungking, and later in Nanking, was anxious to take over the whole of Tibet. Across the undemarcated eastern border, many ethnic Tibetans fell prey to Chinese blandishments, and the Chinese Nationalists were able to involve many subtribal leaders in their machinations. They also secured "volunteers" for a Tibetan army which they hoped to use against Lhasa at a propitious time.⁸

Between 1945 and the spring of 1950, the government of Tibet was highly disturbed, not only by these developments, but by the civil war in China, the collapse of the Chinese Nationalist government, and uncertainty as to where help might be obtained in case the new Communist government of China should decide to make good the Chinese claim to Tibet. At this time the army of the Tibetan government consisted of some 10,000 men, armed with 1914-type weapons plus a few mountain guns and some submachineguns. Attempts to get British assistance in military training and requests to Britain and India for arms had met with only small success.

The Chinese Communists lost no time in incorporating approximately 10,000 dissident Tibetans into a force which—although poorly armed and led and only partially trained—they hoped would assist the regular units of the People's Liberation Army (PLA, the regular Chinese Communist armed force) in the eventual occupation and "liberation" of Tibet.

Tibet Seeks Outside Aid

Recognizing the danger, the Dalai Lama and his advisers decided to call for help and, in the spring of 1950, sent Tibetan missions to India, Nepal, the United Kingdom, and the United States to explain their case and ask assistance. They also chose a mission to go to China in an attempt to make their peace with the Chinese Communists. But the Tibetans had failed to reckon with the 1950 international political situation.¹⁰ Neither the United States nor the United Kingdom gave any encouragement, and the mission to Peking ran into difficulties.

The Chinese Communists Penetrate Tibet

In August 1950, with Communist control consolidated over mainland China, Chinese Premier Mao Tse-tung announced that the "liberation of Tibet" would shortly begin. A large-scale Chinese propaganda campaign was begun against "feudal" Tibet and its "slave-society." By October, PLA forces, numbering probably some 20,000 troops plus 10,000 Tibetans, began the "liberation" of eastern Tibet, the area of easiest access from China. At the same time, smaller Chinese Communist army units penetrated northern Tibet, aiming for the capital at Lhasa.¹¹

Reports indicate that the Chinese hoped to overwhelm any Tibetan resistance by massive numbers, but they were ill-prepared to fight at the end of long transport lines and in high

altitudes. The PLA, with the help of its Tibetan forces, captured Chamdo, the capital of the eastern provinces of Kham and Amdo. According to the Tibetans, whose estimates were confirmed by Chinese Communist sources, Chinese casualties amounted to 2,500 killed in action; 2,000 to 4,000 dead from cold, hunger, or disease; 3,000 missing; and an unknown number wounded. Casualties among the Tibetans were equally high, for the Khamba and Amdowa tribesmen resisted fiercely in spite of command problems and inadequate arms and logistic support. There were two dividends to the Chinese Communists from this initial and unsuccessful attempt at occupation of Tibet proper. First, they captured the Governor of Chamdo, Ngabo Ngawang Jigme, who was later released and has since faithfully collaborated with the Chinese. Second, they learned that problems involved in fighting in Tibet were quite different from those in China and that adequate food, medical assistance, and movement of supplies were essential.¹²

Tibet Appeals to the United Nations

With the Chinese Communist occupation of Chamdo and eastern Tibet in 1950, and the consequent loss of the Tibetan government's wireless station in Chamdo, communication between Lhasa and the outside world became erratic. Nevertheless, the Tibetan government on November 7, 1950, appealed to the United Nations. The Tibetans contended that Chinese claims to Tibet as an integral part of China were not in accord with the facts nor with Tibetan feelings; that if the Chinese wanted to press their claims, against Tibetan opposition, peaceful methods could have been employed. The Tibetans charged that the Chinese resort to force in eastern Tibet was a clear case of aggression.

But only the Republic of El Salvador acted to support the Tibetan case. The British representative pleaded lack of information from Tibet and uncertainty about its legal status. This view was supported by India with the expressed hope that everything would be settled peacefully. The Soviet Union and Nationalist China both opposed discussion of the Tibetan appeal on grounds that Tibet had always been an integral part of China. The United States agreed to an adjournment of the question, accepting the Indian point of view. Nothing more was heard of Tibet in the United Nations for nine years.

The Dalai Lama Accepts Terms

The unexpected strength of the Tibetan resistance and problems of logistics had set back the Chinese Communist timetable. Further major military action was postponed throughout the winter season of 1950-51. Nevertheless, the Chinese had succeeded in occupying eastern Tibet and a small force had crossed into western Tibet, apparently making its way over the high-altitude Aksai Chin plateau. This force took the Tibetans in the west by complete surprise and resistance was quickly subdued. A Chinese representative with an armed guard took up residence in Lhasa. One factor, however, served to block Chinese Communist plans for bringing the

Tibetan government to heel; this was the continued opposition of the Dalai Lama, his supporters among the lamas of the great monasteries, and a loyal corps of Tibetan officials. At the height of the fighting around Chamdo, the Dalai Lama had been persuaded to flee Lhasa with a number of high officials and to take up residence in the Chumbi valley, from which point he could easily cross into India if necessary.¹³

Early in 1951, the Chinese Communists decided to negotiate with the Tibetan government. Emissaries from Peking reached Lhasa during the winter months. The captured governor of Chamdo was used as a chief contact with the Dalai Lama in the Chumbi valley, and by May the details of an agreement were worked out. A Sino-Tibetan 17-point agreement was signed in Lhasa on May 23 with the approval of the Dalai Lama. The Tibetan government was apparently recognized as an autonomous entity within the Chinese Communist governmental structure, and Peking agreed not to alter the existing political system of Tibet or the status, powers, or functions of the Dalai Lama. The Tibetan religious system was to be protected and there were to be no compulsory reforms by the Peking government. On the other hand, the agreement provided for integration of the Tibetan Army within the People's Liberation Army in Tibet and for appointment of an administrative and military committee to implement the terms of the agreement.¹⁴

INSURGENCY

Reaction among the tribes in eastern Tibet was mixed when Chinese forces occupied that area in 1950. The Chinese undoubtedly hoped that the 10,000 Tibetans recruited from the eastern border areas would help give an appearance of a true "liberation" of the Tibetan people from the "reactionary" and "feudal" government in Lhasa. However, both Chinese and Tibetan sources have estimated that from one-third to two-thirds of the Tibetan recruits defected after the fall of Chamdo, and some turned insurgent against the Chinese.

Many Tibetan defectors returned to their homes, while others became wanderers or bandits. Harried by the new Chinese rulers, the Khamba and Ladakha tribesmen forgot their internal differences with Lhasa and rallied to meet the new menace to their freedom. Monks in the large monasteries such as that of Sera—long known for its defense of things Tibetan—provided aid and assistance to the eastern Tibetan tribesmen.

By 1952, however, the Chinese had dealt so ruthlessly with these groups that any organized Tibetan resistance appeared to have been ended. Furthermore, the return of the Dalai Lama to Lhasa in July set an example for large numbers of Tibetans who were persuaded to accept Chinese "assistance" in the modernization of their country.¹⁵

Five Years of Uneasy Maneuvering

An uneasy calm settled over Tibet. The Tibetans did not openly resist the expansion of Chinese influence. There were many visible evidences of the Communist promise to "develop"

Tibet, in the shape of roads, communications, and attempts at agricultural improvement. Also, the Chinese Communist representatives in Lhasa persuaded the Tibetan leaders that a new and better Tibetan government was coming into being with the Chinese only advising in the background.

In September 1954, the Dalai Lama agreed to go to Peking, and he and several high leaders remained there until March 1955. His attendance at various official meetings was, however, so manipulated that he appeared as a leader of an autonomous area of China, thus supporting the Communist contention that Tibet was an integral part of China. The absence of the Dalai Lama from Lhasa also served as a check on insurgent activity in Tibet, since the Khamba and Amdowa rebels feared that he might be incarcerated or physically harmed if they instigated any serious trouble.¹⁶

On the Dalai Lama's return to Lhasa, arrangements were made for setting up the Unified Preparatory Committee for the Autonomous Region of Tibet. A number of highly placed religious and lay Tibetan leaders were involved in the work of this body and its subsidiary committees. Again the Tibetans hoped to retain their own religion and form of society.

Increasing Discontent With Chinese Actions

Although there was no organized insurgency between 1952 and 1956, the roots of unrest remained and grew. The large numbers of tribesmen who had fled or been driven by the Chinese into central Tibet and Lhasa brought with them tales of Communist Chinese rapacity. Stories of the sack of monasteries, of brutal treatment of the population including women and children, and of public humiliation of lamas and monks stirred a spirit of resistance in the Tibetans in Lhasa and in the great monasteries. These reports from eastern Tibet were duplicated by similar reports from the monasteries in outer Tibet, where smaller contingents of Chinese Communist armies had penetrated, acting with equal harshness toward the Tibetans.

In spite of the Chinese commitment in the 1951 agreement not to interfere with the Tibetan religion, attempts to reduce the influence of the monasteries by discrediting the lamas and the monks in the eyes of the people increased. Some monasteries were closed and religious objects publicly destroyed. An increasing number of monks were forced to leave their monasteries and either to farm the land or work on the extensive roadbuilding projects. Such measures offended the deep-seated and centuries-old religious convictions of the Tibetans.

Increasing colonization of eastern Tibet by Chinese settlers and the presence of over 20,000 Chinese occupation troops placed a drain on the food supply. Prices rose and normal items of trade became scarce. Tibetan farmers and herdsmen left their regular habitats in search of food or work. Resentment rose against the Chinese overlord.

Another major cause of unrest was the ruthless and brutal action of Chinese military and local officials who insisted on "reform" and introduced a system of regimentation to which neither the Tibetan farmer nor herdsman had been accustomed.¹ Deportation of dissident Tibetans increased during 1955 and 1956 and numbers of children were sent to China "for educational purposes." All of these factors helped cause the outbreak of armed insurgency in the summer and fall of 1956.

Tribal Raids Increase, 1956-58

Again, the tribesmen in eastern Tibet reacted as they had in the past. Small groups secured arms and began to raid food supply convoys, attack small Chinese military garrisons in the towns, and occasionally blow up bridges and destroy portions of the Chinese military road network. This harassment thoroughly angered the Chinese military, who obviously regarded the Tibetans as an inferior race, and their reaction was thorough and brutal. Public executions and attempts to close down monasteries which supplied insurgent bands, however, only served to further inflame the Amdowa and Khamba tribes.

Cognizant of the growing unrest in eastern Tibet and even in central Tibet and the environs of Lhasa, the Dalai Lama, in July 1956, sent a special mission to eastern Tibet to try to calm the tribesmen. Although there was a brief lull in resistance activity, the mission failed. In fact, its reports caused the Dalai Lama and his most trusted advisers to conclude that the Chinese Communists were really intent on destroying the Tibetan religion and society. It was now also apparent that the Tibetan government was fast losing any real power in the country. From this time on, clandestine assistance to the tribesmen was given by the large monasteries and Tibetan officials in the capital, and Tibetan insurgency grew in extent and depth.

During 1957, insurgent action by small bands of 100 to 200 men increased. As reprisals were taken in proportion, a growing number of disaffected tribesmen from the eastern districts fled to central and southeastern Tibet to escape the wrath of the Chinese military. Their repeated tales of brutality and of the systematic Chinese attempts to destroy the Tibetan religion deepened already strong feelings of resentment. Insurgents began to concentrate in the districts surrounding Lhasa and to the south. By the fall of 1957, insurgent tribesmen were in control of some parts of the eastern districts and of virtually all of the area south of the Tsang-po River to the borders of Sikkim, Bhutan, and India. It was reported that some 10,000 armed insurgents were located in and around Lhasa and another 5,000 to 10,000 were roaming the central and southern areas in bands 100 to 200 strong.

Insurgent strength was sufficiently well organized in May 1958 to wipe out a Chinese Communist garrison of 1,000 troops only 25 miles from the capital. By the fall of that year, another garrison of 3,000 troops at Tsetang, in the valley of the Tsang-po River in southern Tibet was destroyed.¹⁸

Flight of the Dalai Lama

The winter of 1958-59 slowed down insurgent activity, but it was apparent in February that, without drastic action by the Chinese Communists, the insurgency might well succeed. One Chinese reaction was an attempt to capture the Dalai Lama, in order to force him to use his influence to calm the insurgents. When it became apparent that Chinese Communist military forces numbering an additional 20,000 to 40,000 troops were being moved into Tibet while, at the same time, direct pressure was applied to the Dalai Lama, his loyal advisers urged him to seek asylum in India rather than become a puppet. On the night of March 17, 1959, preceded by small groups of his followers, the Dalai Lama secretly left Lhasa and made his way to the Indian border on the eastern edge of Bhutan. His route had been kept secret and, aided by unusually cloudy weather which made Communist plane search most difficult, he was able to make good his escape. The Dalai Lama, with his entourage, was given asylum in Mussoorie, a hill station north of New Delhi, India, and was thus able to communicate with the outside world.¹⁸

The United Nations Considers Tibetan Question

After a few months of exile in India, he and his staff decided to try one more appeal to the United Nations, in a last desperate attempt to save the Tibetans from absorption by the Chinese. The Federation of Malaya and the Republic of Ireland secured consideration of the Tibetan question on the agenda of the U.N. General Assembly at its fall session. Over the objections of the Soviet delegate, but with the support of the United States, the General Committee of the U.N. General Assembly voted 11 to 5 with 4 abstentions to bring the matter formally before the Assembly. Full discussion took place on October 20 and 21, 1959. The proposed resolution failed to mention the Communist People's Republic of China, the status of Tibet, or Tibetan charges of aggression. The resolution, finally carried by a vote of 46 to 9 with 26 abstentions, expressed "grave concern" over "violation of human rights" in Tibet and called for respect for the Tibetan people's "distinctive cultural and religious life."

By the time the resolution was passed in the United Nations, the Tibetan insurgents had been completely defeated and the whole area of Tibet proper had been brought under Chinese military and political control. According to the Dalai Lama and his staff in India, Tibetan refugees had reported that, between 1955 and April 1959, over 65,000 Tibetans had been killed and over 10,000 Tibetan children deported to China.²⁰

COUNTERINSURGENCY

Chinese Communist counterinsurgency must be seen against a particular historical background. Both the Chinese Nationalist government before 1949 and the Chinese Communist government since 1949 regarded Tibet as an integral part of China. Any actions taken to

suppress Tibetan insurgency or resistance were therefore regarded by the Chinese as matters of domestic concern or internal action. Despite the fact that the Tibetan government had been virtually free from Chinese control between 1912 and 1950, had had an autonomous existence, and had even carried on its own foreign negotiations with Great Britain and other countries, the world had never explicitly acknowledged Tibet's independent status. The British and Indian positions on this point had been equivocal.

In April 1954, the Communist position was strengthened when the Peking regime negotiated a new agreement with the government of India. By this agreement, India and Communist China accepted the Chinese-sponsored "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" (Panchshila). By so doing, the Indian government * virtually acknowledged the Chinese position that Tibet was an integral part of China and pledged itself not to interfere in the internal affairs of China.²¹

An Overview of Chinese Measures

It must also be noted that Chinese Communist counterinsurgency action in Tibet was undertaken by a regime that had no compunction about using any measures, no matter how severe, that might serve its purpose. If the Chinese preferred conciliation and cooperation, they also operated on a "no holds barred" basis whenever necessary. Chinese Communist counterinsurgency actions in Tibet matched, if they did not exceed, the methods used by the Japanese during World War II in Southeast Asia, including mass executions, reprisals, torture, terrorism, deportations, and even genocide. The aim of all Chinese actions was to reduce Tibet to a subject territory, abolish Tibetan religion and customs, and integrate the area into the Chinese Communist state.²²

There are two distinct periods in Chinese Communist counterinsurgency in Tibet. The first, from 1951 to 1956, may be considered a period of preventive counterinsurgency. A variety of political and military measures designed to ensure Chinese domination of the country were combined with conciliatory gestures toward the Tibetan government. Many of these were also designed to lull Indian and world opinion.

The second period covers the timespan of active opposition to the organized Tibetan insurgency from the summer of 1956 to the summer of 1959. The Chinese authorities recognized that they were confronted with a large-scale rebellion in central, eastern, and southern Tibet. They could suppress it only by great concessions—which they were not prepared to make—or by ruthless and widespread countermeasures—which they were fully prepared to undertake, conditioned as they were by their Communist ideology. Active counterinsurgency in this second period, however, did not include any new techniques or radical departures from measures

*The main advantage of the agreement for India was apparent Chinese acceptance of the northern Himalaya boundary, later violated by the Chinese in 1962.

undertaken during the longer, earlier period. The difference was one of degree in intensity and scope. For purposes of clarity, Chinese action in these two periods will be described separately and more or less chronologically.

Chinese Modernisation Techniques

From May 1951, when the 17-point Sino-Tibetan agreement was signed, until the end of 1954, the Chinese were generally restrained. Their propaganda was directed at persuading the Tibetans that they were to be "liberated" from their ancient, "reactionary," and "feudal" system: all of the people would be able to enjoy the fruits of their labor, "free from the dead hand of the religion and the power of the lamas and monks." The first primary schools set up by the Chinese, according to the Dalai Lama, "taught the Tibetan language as well as Tibetan prayers. But gradually the Tibetan prayers were dropped and then the Tibetan language gave way to Chinese."²³

Certain steps were taken to break the hold of the monasteries in eastern Tibet. The Chinese forced lamas and monks to leave the monasteries and do degrading manual work. Many were forced to abandon celibacy and to marry, as an example of "reform." Some monasteries were closed and lamas and monks were publicly humiliated or executed; religious objects were publicly destroyed.

Positive action was simultaneously taken to demonstrate to the Tibetans the advantages of "liberation." Two new roads linking Lhasa with China proper were pushed to completion, one from the east and one from the northeast. Thousands of Tibetans, including monks, were forced to work on these roads, but were generally adequately fed and housed. Nonetheless, according to one source, about a quarter of these people died of cold, hunger, or fatigue. Given a steady diet of propaganda, they showed little sign of rebellion while the road construction projects were underway from 1952 to 1956. As fast as road transport became usable, Chinese technicians—experts in animal husbandry to work with the herdsmen, experts on agriculture to instruct the farmers, and cadres to organize village communes and cooperatives—fanned out into central and eastern Tibet. Thus, for a while, many Tibetans were given visible evidence of the modernization of their country which the Chinese had promised.²⁴

The Chinese Gain Control of the Dalai Lama

At the higher level of Tibetan government, Gen. Chang Ching-wu was appointed Commissioner and Administrator of Civil and Military Affairs for Tibet by the Peking regime in July 1952. He immediately made a special trip to talk with the Dalai Lama in the Chumbi valley and persuaded him to return to Lhasa. General Chang moved cautiously but nonetheless firmly to establish dominance over the Dalai Lama and his loyal associates. Certain Tibetan ministers, regarded as too anti-Chinese, were forced out of office. The absence of the Dalai Lama

in Peking from September 1954 to March 1955 was used by the Chinese administration in Tibet to consolidate their political and military control, while the Tibetans, fearful of harm to the Dalai Lama, avoided trouble. When he returned, the Chinese Communists immediately instituted the Unified Preparatory Committee for the Autonomous Region of Tibet (UPCART) which, through its numerous subcommittees, involved almost all the high lamas and lay officials in the capital and principal towns. Although it gradually dawned on the Tibetan officials that UPCART was to be a vehicle for Chinese Communist political control, there was little they could do to oppose it.²⁵ Thus the Chinese gained cooperation, albeit grudging and formal, from the Tibetan administration.

Suppression of Insurgent Violence

During 1955 and early 1956, the Chinese became aware of a growing unrest in the eastern and central area of Tibet. At any sign of overt armed resistance, they quickly moved in military forces to crush it. By the fall of 1956, however, it became obvious to Tibetans and Chinese alike that preventive counterinsurgency measures had somehow been insufficient. In spite of attempts to disarm the villagers, farmers, and herdsmen, a growing number of armed bands were roaming the countryside, pillaging and attacking isolated Chinese military outposts.

Consequently, the Chinese intensified their direct counterinsurgency activities. The Chinese military rounded up small insurgent groups, punishing them on the spot. Mass reprisals against villages were increased and more systematic methods of rooting out dissidents in the monasteries were begun. Some monasteries were bombed and shelled, the monks forced out, and their leaders publicly executed. In some cases, head lamas were dragged to death by horses.²⁶ More Tibetans were deported. Identity cards were required of all Tibetans, and local village and rural committees were set up to provide a core of informants for the Chinese military. Certain attempts were also made at sterilization of both men and women, which later led the Tibetan refugees to denounce the Chinese Communists for the crime of genocide. It was this which occasioned an investigation by a committee of the International Commission of Jurists. The evidence, however, indicated that sterilization was not extensive and was used specifically as a terroristic weapon to gain insurgent compliance and willingness to inform.

China Promises Better Conditions

Meanwhile, in late 1956, India became directly involved in the situation when the Dalai Lama, accepting an invitation to participate in the 2,500th anniversary of the death of the Lord Buddha, proceeded to New Delhi, India, and talked with Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru about the failure of the Chinese Communists to live up to the 1951 Sino-Tibetan agreement. His complaints were relayed to Chinese Foreign Minister Chou En-lai, in New Delhi on a goodwill mission at the time. Chou assured Nehru that the terms of the agreement

would be honored by the Chinese Communists and Nehru advised the Dalai Lama to return to Lhasa.

Publicly and officially, the Peking regime continued its propaganda about its respect for Tibetan autonomy and the Tibetan religion. In February 1957, Mao Tse-tung made a public declaration in Peking that Tibet was "not yet ready" for reforms, and they would be postponed "for at least five years." Following this, some Chinese troops were withdrawn and work on schools, barracks, and a hydroelectric project was stopped. Not long after, however, Mao Tse-tung also announced that some 5 million Chinese would eventually be settled in eastern and central Tibet, and the flow of settlers swelled markedly.²⁷ It is estimated that, between 1951 and 1959, as many as 500,000 to 2,000,000 Chinese settlers moved into Tibet.

This blend of conciliatory and terroristic methods never succeeded in pacifying the country, but only intensified the willingness of Tibetans to risk their lives and families in resistance against the Chinese. By the spring of 1958, the insurgency was widespread.

Increased Military Activity and Buildup

Faced with this increased insurgency, the Chinese military moved again against a number of the major monasteries, intensifying the pattern of looting, destruction, public humiliation, and desecration. Some monasteries where resistance was encountered were destroyed by shelling and bombing. Some 10,000 monks were forced to leave the monasteries; thousands were publicly executed as "enemies of the people."²⁸ These drastic measures only increased insurgent activity. When Chinese garrisons north of Lhasa and at Tsetang on the Tsang-po River were wiped out in May 1958 and estimates showed over 10,000 armed Tibetan insurgents in central and western Tibet, the Peking regime began a marked increase of its Tibetan occupation forces. During 1958-59 Chinese troop strength reached 100,000, as compared with the original force of 25,000 in 1952.²⁹

In March 1959, the final showdown came with great abruptness. Thousands of Tibetan tribesmen had come into the capital and insurgent raids in the areas surrounding Lhasa had intensified to the point where the Chinese military had to move. Apparently hoping that by gaining physical control of the Dalai Lama and using him to calm the people they might avoid harsher measures, the Chinese Communists attempted, somewhat clumsily, to get the Dalai Lama to visit the Chinese commander's compound. The Dalai Lama, however, fled Lhasa and headed for the Indian border. Having anticipated some such move, the Chinese Communist military had blocked the two escape routes they believed the Dalai Lama would use. Their intelligence and counterintelligence system, however, was inadequate to cope with the tribesmen and the loyal supporters of the Dalai Lama, and he and his followers escaped by going south-eastward and entering India along a trail which follows the eastern border of Bhutan. There he

was given asylum by the Indian government. Between 1959 and 1962, an estimated 70,000 Tibetans found refuge in India, Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan.³⁰

Military Reprisals End Insurgency

The escape of the Dalai Lama having forestalled the Chinese Communists' hope of using his influence and prestige for their purposes, the Peking regime consequently moved to put down the Tibetan insurgency by military means, with as much severity as they thought necessary for the task at hand. Chinese Communist troops in Tibet were increased to nearly 180,000 in the fall of 1959, and, under careful direction of military commanders, large elements fanned out to conduct a series of swarms throughout southern, eastern, and central Tibet. Tibetans even suspected of insurgency were ruthlessly killed, and mass reprisals were taken against whole families and villages. In and around Lhasa an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 Tibetans were killed and an unknown number wounded and captured. The Chinese claimed to have captured over 8,000 weapons with ammunition. Insurgent leaders, wherever found, were publicly executed.

By the end of 1960, the Chinese Communists, with their overwhelming numbers, superior arms and equipment, and the mobility gained from their new road network, had thoroughly and effectively brought the whole country under their control. For all practical purposes, the insurgency had been successfully put down.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

Having secured military control of Tibet, the Chinese Communists established firm administrative and political control, using the Panchen Lama and Ngabo, the former Governor of Chamdo, and other Tibetan officials to create a semblance of Tibetan administration. For practical purposes, the Chinese succeeded in integrating Tibet within the administrative system of China proper. Through large-scale settlement of Chinese in Tibet, it is likely that the Tibetan people will become so intermingled with the Chinese that they will eventually lose their identity.

With the pacification of Tibet, the Chinese were free to complete their strategic plans to safeguard their southern frontiers against any incursions from the outside. In order to provide military mobility within Tibet, the Chinese increased road construction and airfield building, largely with Tibetan forced labor. They also took the opportunity to stockpile military supplies, thus giving them an offensive base for a later invasion of the Indian frontier.

External and Internal Repercussions

Successful suppression of the Tibetan insurgency had repercussions in India and on Indian policy. In granting asylum to the Dalai Lama and almost 70,000 other Tibetan refugees, the

Indian government insisted it was not recognizing a government-in-exile, and it attempted to prevent political activity on the part of the Dalai Lama and his representatives. The Indian press and many members of the Indian Parliament, however, were critical of the willingness of their government to accept Chinese claims to Tibet. Fears were voiced that Chinese Communist occupation of Tibet would result in direct confrontation between India and China.

These fears appeared justified when it was learned that the Chinese Communists had constructed the Tibet-Sinkiang road across the Aksai Chin plateau of Ladakh, a part of Indian-controlled Kashmir. Then, in 1962, after clashes between Indian and Chinese patrols in Ladakh, the Chinese Communists swept across the northeast Indian frontier. Just as suddenly, Peking declared a unilateral cease-fire and withdrew. By this show of force, the Chinese succeeded in effectively sealing off the southern and southeastern borders of Tibet.

Apart from the Indian reaction, Chinese Communist suppression of the Tibetan insurgency seemed to have little effect on other nations. The Dalai Lama's appeal to the United Nations was answered only by expressions of regret. Chinese Communist pressure on India for a settlement of the border was increased by the conclusion of three other border agreements, with Burma, Nepal, and Pakistan. At the time of this writing, in mid-1964, an uneasy truce exists along the Indian-Tibetan border with no likelihood of settlement in sight.

Information from Tibet has been so meager since 1960 that it is difficult to estimate the economic consequences of total Chinese control over the area. The large-scale settlement of Chinese in central and eastern Tibet has reduced the food supply, at least until extensive agricultural development takes place. Economic losses in Tibet may be partially offset by the extensive development of roads and of more intensive agriculture and livestock raising. The Tibetans themselves have suffered a radical change in their society, economy, and traditional customs. The Tibetan religion has been denigrated and discredited. In effect, the Tibetans have become second-class citizens in a Communist system.

Chinese Measures Reviewed

In their counterinsurgency measures between 1951 and 1960, the Chinese Communists used any method that might further their aim of complete domination of the country. After the initial occupation, the Chinese representatives in Lhasa appeared to be conciliatory; then they found that unless they actually lived up to the promise of full Tibetan autonomy contained in the Sino-Tibetan agreement of 1951, they would encounter substantial resistance. They tried first to obtain the support of the Dalai Lama and his loyal lamas and officials, and when this failed, to gain control of his person. Repressive counterinsurgency measures undertaken between 1956 and March 1959 had the effect of hardening the Tibetan will to resist, and the insurgency had to be suppressed by total military force in the end.

It is an interesting commentary on the current state of public attitudes and of cold war politics that—although there was ample evidence that Chinese counterinsurgency measures used in Tibet were probably the most ruthless, coldblooded, and brutal of any undertaken anywhere in the past few decades*—world opinion was not aroused. Neither public groups nor governments opposed to communism made major use of the Chinese Communists' suppression of the Tibetan people to support their anti-Communist thesis.

Perhaps this is an indication that Chinese propaganda was effective, since they had consistently maintained that the situation in Tibet was purely an internal problem. Yet although the Portuguese in Angola and the South African Government have taken the same position, discussion has not been prevented or deterred in the United Nations or in the public press. For the Dalai Lama and the Tibetans in exile, this disinterest in their plight has been most disheartening.

Two other interesting aspects of the Chinese counterinsurgency in Tibet may be pointed out. First, even if one grants that the Chinese Communists preferred to "liberate" the Tibetans with as little violence as possible and to cooperate with them in Chinese-directed modernization of their country, it was impossible for the Chinese Communists to permit the continued existence of an alien religious-social system among a people under their control. Their own interpretation of Marxist-Leninist doctrine dictated that they should make every effort to reform the Tibetans in their own image. Second, the treatment meted out to the Tibetans was no worse than that which the Chinese Communist regime used on its own people in the years immediately following its takeover in China proper. Yet, Tibet was different: it was populated by non-Chinese, and the Peking regime acted in a way comparable to a colonial power in the old days of imperialism, but with even greater violence and ruthlessness. When drastic suppressive measures only stirred more revolt, the Chinese resorted to overwhelming military force as the only method by which Tibet could be integrated into the Communist framework.

It seems probable that within two or three decades the Chinese Communists will have succeeded in so dispersing and reducing the Tibetans that they will have ceased to exist as a national, racial, or cultural entity.

*After the spring of 1959, testimony of the thousands of Tibetan refugees was documented by the reports of the International Commission of Jurists. These first-hand accounts were far more extensive than accounts of Portuguese counterinsurgency in Angola or even of South African counterinsurgency.

NOTES

¹Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet, Tibet and the Chinese Peoples' Republic (Geneva: International Commission of Jurists, 1960), ch. 3; Hugh E. Richardson, Tibet and Its History (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), chs. 7, 8, and 9; Frank Moraes, The Revolt in Tibet (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1960), chs. 2 and 4.

²Richardson, Tibet, chs. 7, 8, and 9.

³Ibid., ch. 1.

⁴Pedro Carrasco, Land and Polity in Tibet (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1959), ch. 1; Richardson, Tibet, chs. 8 and 9.

⁵Richardson, Tibet, chs. 7, 8, and 9.

⁶From the preliminary report to the International Commission of Jurists, quoted in Moraes, Revolt, p. 177.

⁷Carrasco, Land, chs. 1 and 3; Richardson, Tibet, ch. 9.

⁸Richardson, Tibet, chs. 9 and 10.

⁹Ibid., chs. 11 and 12.

¹⁰Ibid., chs. 9 and 11.

¹¹Ibid., ch. 12.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴For the text of this agreement, see Richardson, Tibet, pp. 275ff.

¹⁵Moraes, Revolt, chs. 2 and 3; Richardson, Tibet, chs. 12 and 13.

¹⁶Richardson, Tibet, ch. 12.

¹⁷Ibid., chs. 12 and 13, Moraes, Revolt, chs. 2 and 3.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Moraes, Revolt, ch. 1, Richardson, Tibet, ch. 13.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Richardson, Tibet, pp. 278 ff.

²²Ibid., ch. 3; Moraes, Revolt, chs. 3 and 7, Legal Inquiry Committee, Tibet and the CPR.

²³Quoted in Moraes, Revolt, p. 205.

²⁴Moraes, Revolt, ch. 7; Richardson, Tibet, chs. 12 and 13.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Moraes, Revolt, ch. 7.

²⁷Richardson, Tibet, chs. 12 and 13.

²⁸Legal Inquiry Committee, Tibet and the CPR; Moraes, Revolt, chs. 4 and 5.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Moraes, Revolt, ch. 1.

SELECTED READING

- Carrasco, Pedro. Land and Polity in Tibet. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1959. A thorough and scholarly study of the Tibetan economy, land tenure, and social conditions.
- Lamb, Alastair. British and Chinese in Central Asia. London: Rutledge and Kegan Paul, 1960. Excellent historical account of British interests in Tibet and Central Asia.
- Li T'ie-cheng. Tibet Today and Yesterday. New York: Bookman Associates, 1960. (Revised edition of The Historical Status of Tibet, 1956.) A presentation of the Chinese point of view.
- Moraes, Frank. The Revolt in Tibet. New York: Macmillan and Co., 1960. A good account by an Indian journalist, highly critical of Indian policy.
- Norbu, Thubten. Tibet Is My Country. New York: Dutton, 1961. A good presentation of the Tibetan point of view by the Dalai Lama's brother.
- Patterson, George N. Tibet in Revolt. London: Faber and Faber, 1960. A good first-hand account by a British ex-missionary and journalist who lived in Kalimpong during the period.
- Richardson, Hugh E. Tibet and Its History. London: Oxford University Press, 1960. By far the best single history of Tibet and the period of the insurgency by a British political officer with long service in Sikkim and Tibet, and who was in Lhasa when the Chinese occupation began. Good maps.
- Thomas, Lowell J. The Silent War in Tibet. New York: Doubleday, 1959. A commentary by the well-known radio commentator and traveler who visited Lhasa in 1949.

TECHNICAL APPENDIX: THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A MULTI-AUTHOR APPROACH

With 57 discrete cases* of counterinsurgency to be studied, it became necessary to locate many different persons to do the work. Some of the cases could be prepared by experts within this office beyond this, outside help had to be sought. University faculty lists were examined; professional and academic journals were reviewed for related work; area experts and academic friends were consulted in an effort to locate qualified persons available to undertake the work. Before anyone was asked to contribute to this project, his professional reputation, background, and publications were checked. A total of 45 persons, mainly from some 14 universities, eventually contributed to the project.

The very number of contributors offered certain research problems. Most of these persons were not acquainted with counterinsurgency as a function or process of government; some did not recognize the word. Although a few had had actual experience in the field, this was generally as insurgents, not counterinsurgents. The contributors also represented a variety of backgrounds, experiences, ages, points of view, and fields of discipline; most of them were not in direct day-to-day contact with this office. There was thus a high degree of real danger that the final products would vary, not only in quality, but in focus. Given his own preferences, an anthropologist might concentrate on the primitive tribes of an area, a political scientist on the theory of its government, an economist on the state of its industrial development, and a historian on the long-range background of events leading up to the insurgent-counterinsurgent situation. In short, it was apparent that, to avoid ending with an assortment of diverse and incompatible studies, some constructive methodological steps had to be taken to guide and focus the work of the contributors and to provide for comparability of effort and achievement.

STANDARDIZATION OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The major means by which the research effort was standardized was through the use of a tool known as "The Information Categories." Created by the editors as a short taxonomic guide, this was a list of 91 categories of critical information on internal conflict, divided into four

*For the criteria used in selecting cases and the complete alphabetical list of cases, see "Introduction."

major substantive sections—Background, Insurgency, Counterinsurgency and Outcome and Conclusions—with a final Working Aids section. There were 20 categories of information concerning background facts, 25 concerning the insurgent situation, 30 concerning counterinsurgency, 12 concerning outcome and conclusions, and 4 on such details as chronology, bibliography, maps, and illustrations.

Each contributor was asked to answer the 91 information categories (listed below) before he proceeded to write an essay on the case. Thus it was assured that, although cases might differ radically, the same kinds of questions had been considered for each and a certain degree of standardization of approach obtained.

Table 1: THE INFORMATION CATEGORIES

Section I: Background Facts

The Country

1. Size of country (compare to a state)
2. Terrain
3. Climate

Ethnic and Social Background Factors

4. Size of population and geographical distribution
5. Ethnic groups (numbers and/or percentages)
6. Religions (numbers and/or percentages)
7. Briefly characterize the familial, ethnic, and social patterns that had a significant bearing on the insurgency (e.g., urban, rural, and regional differences, traditional view towards violence).
8. Rank (1-2-3) in order of importance those factors noted in category 7.

Economic Factors

9. Characterize the general economic situation of the country (e.g., agricultural-industrial-commercial ratio, GNP) and its standard of living (e.g., unemployment, farming conditions, distribution of wealth within state, wealth of people in relation to their neighbors, etc.) at the time insurgency began.
10. Rank those economic conditions that affected the outbreak or growth of the insurgency.

Political Factors

11. Form of government (at the outbreak of insurgency)
12. Major political parties
13. Major political figures
14. Popularity of government (e.g., bases of support, antigovernment sentiment)
15. Antigovernment political groups (e.g., number, aims, relative importance)
16. Role of communism (may be same as #15)
17. Rank the political conditions which especially affected the outbreak or growth of the insurgency.

Military Factors

18. Briefly describe and rank according to importance any military conditions that affected the outbreak or growth of the insurgency.

Other Factors

19. List and rank any conditions not noted above that affected the outbreak or growth of the insurgency (e.g., foreign occupation).

Ranking Between Factors

20. List in descending order of importance the conditions or factors noted in 1-19 above that you feel were mainly responsible for the insurgency.

Table 1 (continued)

Section II: The Insurgency

Form of Insurgency

21. For each of the following forms which are applicable, give, if possible, the approximate dates for such activity, the area(s) affected, and any special features of such activity:
- Underground resistance
 - Overt guerrilla warfare
 - Insurgent area control
 - Use of conventional tactics (i. e., positional or large-scale warfare)

Political Phase of Insurgency. Answer 22-28 for each major resistance group.

- Political organization(s)
- Major political leaders
- Political aims
- Communist involvement (e. g., kind and degree, leaders, organization)
- Popular support (at varying dates and places)
- Underground strength and organization
- Underground operations (propaganda, terrorism, e. c.)
- Relationships and interaction among political resistance groups

Military Phase of Insurgency. Answer 30-38 for each major resistance group.

- Military organization of fighting units
- Major military figures
- Recruitment, training, and indoctrination of troops
- Local logistic support:
 - Mobile
 - Fixed bases
 - Equipment and supplies
- Strengths (at varying dates, particularly at start and finish, and high and low points)
- Insurgent casualties (if possible, distinguish as to dead, wounded, and missing)
- Strategy and tactics (describe briefly)
- Intelligence and counterintelligence
- Special features (e. g., tribalism, special ceremonies)
- Interrelationships and interaction of guerrilla groups

External Aid for Insurgents. Answer 40-44 for each major resistance group.

- Countries involved
- Date(s) aid began and ended
- Form and degree of aid:
 - Personnel (type of work, relation with insurgents, numbers, etc.)
 - Supplies (type, amount, how delivered)
 - Sanctuary (where, use, etc.)
 - Cost of aid (give basis for estimate, personnel casualties, supply tons, aircraft losses)
 - Other

Table 1 (continued)

- 43. Effect of outside aid on insurgency situation, both military and political
- 44. International reactions to external aid for insurgents

Ranking Between Factors

- 45. List and rank those features of the insurgency situation discussed in categories 21-44 above that should be emphasized in any discussion of the subject.

Section III: Counterinsurgency

Recognition of the Problem and Initial Response

- 46. Describe briefly (a) the first recognition of and (b) the first concerted response to the insurgency problem by the counterinsurgents.

Indigenous Counterinsurgency Forces

- 47. General organization of forces (including tactical troops; police at national, local, and municipal levels; paramilitary units; pro-government political and social organizations)
- 48. Major military figures
- 49. Strengths (at varying times and places)
- 50. Recruitment and training of special counterinsurgency troops
- 51. Casualties (distinguish as to dead, wounded, and missing):
 - a. Military
 - b. Civil administration
 - c. Civilians

External Aid for Counterinsurgent Forces

- 52. Identify the most applicable role of non-indigenous counterinsurgent forces in one (or more) of the following terms:
 - a. Colonial power
 - b. Friendly power
 - c. Occupier
 - d. Dominant area power (e.g., Russia in Eastern Europe, the United States in Latin America)
 - e. Regional organization (NATO, OAS)
 - f. World organization (United Nations)
- 53. Describe their relationship to indigenous forces (e.g., as advisers, leaders, tactical forces, etc.).
- 54. Organization of such forces at varying times and places
- 55. Major foreign figures involved in counterinsurgency
- 56. Strengths (at varying times and places)
- 57. Recruitment and training of troops
- 58. Casualties (distinguish as to dead, wounded, and missing):
 - a. Military
 - b. Civil administration
 - c. Civilians

Table 1 (continued)

- 59. Economic aid, including technical personnel, equipment, and funds
- 60. Home country reaction to involvement of non-indigenous forces in counterinsurgency
- 61. International reaction to involvement of non-indigenous forces in counterinsurgency:
 - a. Free world
 - b. Communist
 - c. Uncommitted

Military Measures

- 62. Strategy
- 63. Tactics:
 - a. Field operations
 - b. Airpower
 - c. Amphibious and naval power
 - d. Psywar field operations (distinguish three targets: enemy personnel, PGW's, local population in operational areas)
 - e. Other special features (e.g., pseudo-gangs)
- 64. Intelligence and counterintelligence
- 65. Logistics
- 66. Special military problems
- 67. Rank measures according to effectiveness.

Nonmilitary Measures

- 68. Economic and social reforms (note timing)
- 69. Political, administrative, and legal reforms (note timing)
- 70. Offers of armistice and parole; settlement and rehabilitation of active insurgents
- 71. Population management and control:
 - a. Civic action programs
 - b. Resettlement programs
 - c. Control of sabotage and subversion
 - d. Riot and strike control, curfews
 - e. Intimidation, repression, coercion (e.g., collective punishments, reprisals, hostages)
 - f. Other measures
- 72. Political ideology and indoctrination—psyops, slogans, etc.; information media (radio, press, etc.)

Other External Influences on Counterinsurgency

- 73. Describe briefly any critical external influence by powers other than the dominant external counterinsurgent force (e.g., British aid in South Vietnam where U.S. is dominant external counterinsurgency force).

Ranking

- 74. List, in order of importance, the military and nonmilitary measures that were of greatest effectiveness in counterinsurgent operations.

Table 1 (continued)

75. Briefly discuss the reasons for the failure of the counterinsurgent campaign, ranking the reasons according to their importance. Distinguish among military, political, economic, and other external factors.

Section IV: Outcome and Conclusions

End of Hostilities

- 76. When ended; how
- 77. Military situation at end of hostilities
- 78. Political situation at end of hostilities
- 79. Economic and social situation

Political Settlement

- 80. What it was
- 81. How arrived at
- 82. International influences on
- 83. Ramifications of political settlement

Economic Consequences of Conflict and Settlement

- 84. Negative: loss of agricultural and industrial products, unemployment, homelessness, devastation of villages and economic resources, civilian casualties, famine, inflation, breakdown of trade patterns, etc.
- 85. Positive: resettlement, buildup of roads, introduction of outside aid, absorption of minority groups, better division of land, etc.

Other Results

- 86. Describe briefly.

Future Prognosis

- 87. Describe briefly:
 - a. Viability of settlement
 - b. Short-range (5 years) vulnerabilities
 - c. Long-range vulnerabilities (e.g., irredentism, hostile neighbors)

Section V: Working Aids

Chronology

- 88. Give a brief chronology of the most important and decisive events of the insurgency and counterinsurgency situation (e.g., dates of beginning and end of colonial and/or occupation period, outbreak and cessation of hostilities, etc.)

Maps and Illustrations

- 89. List any maps and/or illustrations that would be helpful in presenting this short study. Of particular importance for this study are maps showing

Table 1 (continued)

topographic features and lines of communication at the time of the insurgency
and any available military situation maps.

Reading

90. Cite and briefly annotate the books and/or articles that you believe would best help in giving the reader a clear and more ample view of this particular counterinsurgency situation.

Other Materials

91. Are there any other persons to be consulted or materials that might be used to clarify or amplify this study?

SOME TAXONOMIC PROBLEMS

The Information Categories could obviously have numbered fewer or far more than 91. For this study, 91 was an arbitrary number: It left no great gaps in the analysis and covered what were considered to be the critical elements; at the same time, it was a number sufficiently small that a researcher could respond to the categories within a reasonable time.

The major taxonomic problem in the information categories concerned the matter of specificity versus generality. On the one hand, the categories had to be general enough in nature to be applicable to a wide variety of internal conflict experience in various parts of the world. On the other hand, they had to be specific enough to elicit the type of detailed information necessary to produce a study that might have value for the user.

For this reason, the information categories were framed in as specific a manner as possible while still maintaining their applicability over a wide range of experience. There was considerable emphasis within the categories upon such mundane military facts as organization, recruitment-training-indoctrination of troops, local logistic support, and so forth, and such figures as strengths, casualties, costs, and so forth. By count, there were many more specific questions concerning facts and figures than categories of a highly generalized nature.

Where information categories dealt with causative factors—and thus involved both qualitative matters and personal judgment—it was necessary to generalize. Information category number 7 was one such example: "Briefly characterize the familial, ethnic, and social patterns that had a significant bearing on the insurgency." It was well understood that the problems involved in any such inquiry would be numerous. How could one "briefly characterize"? What was meant by "significant bearing"? Was it possible—or desirable—to separate the "familial, ethnic, and social patterns" from the context of economic, political, and military aspects of a total situation? Complete or even adequate response on some questions was impossible, if for no other reason than time. Furthermore, there was a real doubt as to whether, even granting adequate time and money for research, certain questions could be definitively answered. Under these circumstances, the information categories concerning general causative factors were set up in such a way as, optimally, to gain a consensus of best judgment and, minimally, to obtain one informed guess. Such was the limited but pragmatic position taken in this study methodology.

The categories not only provided for the collection of information or data; they were also a tool for analysis. In each section, certain categories required the exercise of judgment. For example, background categories numbers 8, 10, 17, 18, and 19 all required ranking—of ethnic and social factors, economic factors, political factors, military factors, and other factors, respectively—and category 20 then required that all these separate factors be mixed and ranked in the order of those thought to be most responsible for the outbreak of insurgency.

This simple ranking system had certain advantages for the project. While ranking within categories assured that the respondent had duly considered the one aspect of the problem, ranking between categories forced the respondent to review and qualify his prior judgments in the light of other factors. Nonetheless, it must be acknowledged, even emphasized, that such ranking of causative factors achieved a hierarchy of judgments rather than of hard facts. The point is, however, that, no matter what tools are used, non-materiel research has devised neither laboratory nor testing processes for providing indisputable evidence on or the replication of social science factors.

It should also be noted that this methodology did not provide a "consensus" view. It rendered the judgment of one individual considered to be knowledgeable in the field. That judgment was, of course, strongest where the weight of evidence was heaviest and clearest; weakest, where the evidence was scanty or beclouded. But these problems would also have been reflected to some extent in a consensus judgment. The use of only one person in answering the 91 critical information categories was most fraught with danger at that point where personal bias entered. This potential flaw in the one-person response was accepted, however, because it was judged less of a difficulty than that inherent in obtaining a consensus judgment. The single-person response maximized intuitive insight; and, since it was also subject to proof via facts offered in its support, it became public and verifiable.

The taxonomy represented by the 91 information categories should be regarded as a tool for the data collection and analysis phase through which each of the 57 case studies passed. Its purpose was to ensure that similar categories of information were considered for every case, even though any given case might vary widely from another. In a sense, the information categories represented a crutch. In another sense, they provided minimal direction and maximal consistency of analytic procedures prior to the writing of the case studies.

THE CASE STUDIES

Objectives

The individual case studies written for this and the other two volumes in this series were prepared with the idea of providing, within relatively few pages, an introduction to a unique historical experience in internal conflict. They were especially planned to place the insurgency-counterinsurgency situation within its proper historical perspective and overall strategic context. Although emphasizing the military aspects of the experience, the contributors hoped to show the sociopolitical and economic interface within which military measures were taken and military events occurred. In no sense were the studies supposed to provide an intensive, in-depth analysis of specific aspects of the situation; this was not their function. Rather, the

case studies were supposed to provide an introductory overview and review of what was a historical situation.

Within these objectives, there were varying degrees of realization. Such diverse factors as the availability of documentary sources, witnesses, or participants, and the perceptiveness of the author, or even his ability to express himself, affected the quality of the work. At the least, the articles were supposed to provide a state-of-the-art review of what was known of a given situation; often this was a unique contribution to the field. At their best, they actually provided a summary overview incorporating original and new material, such as that gathered through the use of foreign archives or interviews with key participants. Occasionally, a paper was of special value because the author himself had been a participant in the events he described.

Each case study was reviewed as it was received and reviewed again through any subsequent revisions. When the editors felt it necessary—as, for example, because of their own unfamiliarity with the subject matter or because they wished to double check their own impressions—they sought additional review, both from within the office and from outside sources. Although it cannot be overemphasized that the author was in every instance the final judge of the product and of what was included or omitted from his own case study, the editors did submit suggestions for consideration. It may therefore be of some interest to indicate on what basis the review process operated.

Criteria for Review

Ten standards were set up by which to gauge some measure of worth of individual studies. Six of these criteria were more or less quantifiable and definite—length, format, style, documentation, consistency, and emphasis on military counterinsurgency. Four standards were incapable of definite measurement. These included the questions of comprehensiveness and perspective, simplification and complexity, controversy and consensus, and objectivity and interpretation.

The first six criteria may be briefly described. In length the average article was about 40-45 double-spaced, typewritten pages, although the variation ranged from one of 20 pages to one of 76 pages. Regardless of length, the articles were submitted to the same kind of review and, in the case of long articles, particularly scrutinized to decide whether their additional length was worthwhile.

The format of the articles was always the same. The background was followed by sections describing the insurgency, the counterinsurgency, and the outcome and conclusions, with two final sections for footnotes and a selected reading list. One problem concerning format centered on the fact that insurgency and counterinsurgency activity usually occurred within the

same time phase. This problem was handled in a variety of ways, according to the needs of the situation. Sometimes the story was told twice, with varying emphasis; sometimes it was possible to divide the time period, treating the first phase as mainly an insurgency matter and the second phase as mainly a counterinsurgency matter. The most general way of handling the problem was to discuss the insurgency in terms of how it operated and the counterinsurgency in terms of a dynamic, unfolding situation. Such a treatment had the added advantage of emphasizing the counterinsurgency, the major subject of this study.

Style of writing is a subject on which much could be written. For the purpose of a study such as this, any style—so long as it was clear and informative—was acceptable. In fact, the natural variation of literary style between authors was welcome. Every article, however, was edited in this office, and this process, inevitably, tended to standardize somewhat the stylistic qualities of the various studies.

Internal documentation and footnoting varied widely between individual studies. Those authors who had had personal experience, those who had traveled widely within an area, and those who had written previously on the subject tended, on the whole, to document their work to a much lesser degree than those whose knowledge came mainly through study. The author's field of discipline and his professional background, as well as his personal reaction, also seemed to dictate some variation. The minimum standard accepted for this work was that a general note of sources should be given for each section, so that the reader would have a clear idea where the facts were derived and where he might go to check them. On the other hand, footnoting could become a hindrance by its overuse; in general, sources were grouped and incorporated into a single footnote at the end of a paragraph.

Consistency, meaning the lack of internal contradiction within a study, was carefully checked in the review process. Sometimes apparent discrepancies were merely ambiguities in phrasing. Cases of apparent internal discrepancy were usually reviewed with the author. When this was not possible, the matter was submitted to further research. The originally cited sources were checked to be sure they had not been misinterpreted, and additional sources were used for corroboration. It would be imprudent to hope that all internal inconsistency has been removed from the studies, but a strenuous effort was made to avoid its occurrence.

Emphasis on military matters was an objective of the study, but not at the expense of reality or clarity. If, for example, the situation was primarily dependent on political maneuverings and military means were used mainly to obtain political advantage, it would have been unrealistic to pretend otherwise and less than clear to have written a study on the military measures without explaining their relationship to the total situation. Although this project was primarily concerned with the military response, this obviously never occurred alone and in a vacuum. It was hoped, rather, that military measures could be emphasized without unduly elevating their importance. One of the objectives of the study was to try to show the interface

between military and non-military counterinsurgency and how the one might enhance or detract from the value of the other.

With the criterion of emphasis, which lay somewhere in between those that could be rather easily measured and those that could not, the quality review process shifted to consideration of some remarkably ephemeral criteria.

The matter of comprehensiveness and perspective, for example, involved more a point of view than concrete fact and covered a wide range of questions. For example, was an omitted detail so important that it should have been included? And in whose view? Did the study present a good overall assessment of the general situation and of the role of the various counterinsurgency measures? Had enough time elapsed to allow careful and unbiased consideration of the case? Obviously, many of the cases in this study had occurred recently, and some, notably South Viet-Nam, were still ongoing. The passage of time may afford many different views of what constitutes comprehensiveness, not only in this case but in many others. Yet the project must be finished, its undertaking was a reflection of the need for information on internal conflict, particularly on counterinsurgency, the problem of today and now. The present study must therefore accept these inexorably imposed limitations and hope that time will not invalidate the views of today.

The issues raised by the question of comprehensiveness and perspective led directly into the related matters of simplification and complexity. Every contributor to this project faced a major problem in that it was necessary to present and explain diffuse, many-sided, and complex matters in a few pages without introducing a hopeless confusion or resorting to a false simplism. Although the space limitation implied a need for some simplification of treatment, it was the aim to accomplish this objective through literary devices and to present difficult issues in a simple-to-understand, but not simplistic form. It was, in every case, considered undesirable to avoid complexity simply because it was complex.

The matter of controversy and consensus referred to those situations in which there were differences of opinion among experts concerning some phase of or judgment concerning a counterinsurgency situation. Some consideration of these points has already been discussed. It was the position of those monitoring this study that, in situations where disagreement existed among experts, sufficient time generally did not exist to resolve the problem—if indeed the necessary data were available or the nature of the problem was such as to lend itself to resolution. Those controversies raged strongest, of course, where neither side could prove its point beyond dispute. It was, however, considered desirable that the fact of disagreement between experts be explained and that the position of the author, if he took one, be stated in the outcome and conclusions section, where it would be seen as clearly his own position.

The final criterion by which the studies were individually judged in the quality review process was objectivity. Yet this criterion defied definition and presented a major philosophical

problem, a matter of some epistemological speculation. By what standard was a given thing or idea or conclusion "objective"? On a more pragmatic basis, in such studies as these it was possible that, even where personal judgment was not given, the reader's perception of the case might be determined by the manner in which evidence was marshaled and presented. Again, given the best will in the world to be "objective," what researcher could be truly so? He remained, as do we all, bound by his innate view of life, his cultural background, his psychological heritage, his intellectual abilities. He was also caught in time, bound to some unknown extent by the perceptions of his era. In this dilemma, one may only lay claim to good will. To the knowledge of the project monitors, no one used these articles as a forum for polemics, and certainly unlabeled bias was not knowingly left in any study. Thus one may hope that the studies have attained some acceptable degree of objectivity as measured from the vantage point of the future.

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Unclassified

Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D		
(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)		
1 ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author)		2a REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION
Center for Research in Social Systems		Unclassified
		2b GROUP
		--
3 REPORT TITLE		
Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict. Vol. I: The Experience in Asia.		
4 DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)		
--		
5 AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)		
D. M. Condit, Bert H. Cooper, Jr., and Others		
6 REPORT DATE	7a TOTAL NO OF PAGES	7b NO. OF REFS
Research and Writing Completed November 1965	xxiv + 596	--
8a CONTRACT OR GRANT NO	9a ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NO (S)	
DAHC 19-67-C-0046	--	
b PROJECT NO	9b OTHER REPORT NO (S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
c	--	
d		
10 DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT		
Distribution of This Document Is Unlimited.		
11 SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		12 SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY
		OCRD, DA Washington, D.C.
13 ABSTRACT		
<p>The present study is one of three volumes in a series entitled <u>Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict</u>. The series contains descriptive and analytical accounts covering a total of 57 cases of insurgency and counterinsurgency occurring in the 20th century. The three volumes are individually entitled <u>The Experience in Asia</u>, <u>The Experience in Europe and the Middle East</u>, and <u>The Experience in Africa and Latin America</u>.</p> <p>The purpose of the project was to enlarge the body of knowledge about insurgency and especially counterinsurgency by empirical study of actual historic cases. From a sample of about 150 cases, 57 were selected according to criteria governing time, definition, occurrence of military operations, analogy, and feasibility. Persons of academic and professional background were then selected to study individual cases according to a standardized methodology (described in the Technical Appendix).</p> <p>The individual studies were written in a format covering background, insurgency, counterinsurgency, and outcome and conclusions, followed by notes and bibliographic material. The studies have been grouped geographically in three volumes to form casebooks on the subject of internal conflict. In addition, the cases now published plus some further materials collected during their preparation form a data bank for the further analysis of insurgency and counterinsurgency.</p>		

DD FORM 1 NOV 65 1473

Unclassified

Security Classification

Unclassified

Security Classification

14. KEY WORDS	LINK A		LINK B		LINK C	
	ROLE	WT	ROLE	WT	ROLE	WT
Internal conflict						
Insurgency						
Counterinsurgency						
Asia						
Resistance						
Unconventional warfare						
Guerrilla warfare						
Security forces						
Resettlement						
Counter guerrilla operations						
Paramilitary organizations						
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